





THE WOMEN OF THE DEBATABLE
LAND



ALEXANDER HUNTER
of the Black Horse Cavalry.

The Women of the Debatable Land

By ALEXANDER HUNTER

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Huntsmen of the South" and "Johnny Reb
and Billy Yank"

ILLUSTRATED BY MISS ELIZABETH C. HARMON

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DEDICATED

To the Southern Women of the Sixties:

The survivors of the Confederate Armies are on their last march, their faces are turned to the setting sun, and each step that they take is down hill. As one of the veterans who followed Lee and Jackson, I esteem it a proud privilege to voice through this book the sentiments of my comrades in paying a tribute to the women of the South during the Civil War.

We admired those women for their devotion to the cause for which we fought. We honored them for their ceaseless effort to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. We idealized them as being the highest type of womanhood that had been evolved since the dawn of time, and we loved them as uncrowned queens. How many of us, when raving with the fever in the dim wards of the hospitals, or wan, pallid, near bloodless, blessed them for their tender care and gentle ministrations. How many, how very many, died with a light in their eyes, a prayer in their hearts, a benediction on their lips for the women of the "Sixties."

And

To the United Daughters of the Confederacy:

Those noble women who have given their time, their labor and their money to honor the men who fought for their freedom; those who have aided the indigent and infirm, and have labored to preserve the truth of history, whose strenuous work has been crowned with success, and who have made the South "The Land of Song and Story."

PREFACE.

I write this book for a purpose. For years I have talked, spoken and written on one theme dear to my heart, and that is a magnificent statue to the Virginia woman of the sixties. The women of the Old Commonwealth have erected many monuments in remembrance of the Confederate Soldiers, and it should have been a sacred duty for the Veterans to have a splendid statue carved in memory of those who divided their sorrows and doubled their joys.

A half a century has passed, and the survivors of the Civil War are few and far between, but their children and children's children should consider it a sacred obligation to erect a memento to the women of Virginia who sacrificed their all that the cause they loved should never die.

If this book should even in a measure invoke popular sentiment to accomplish this end, and if I live to see such a statue before I cross the Mystic River, I can exclaim with my last breath, "I have not lived in vain."

While the women in no section of Virginia failed in the least to bear their share of the fearful burdens of that terrible war, I know those of one section best, and of them I particularly, therefore, write in this book. That section during the Civil War was called the Debatable Land, or "Mosby's Confederacy." By turns it was swept by the rival armies of the Blue and the Gray; and was like the great valley that divided

the Highlanders from the Lowlanders where the rival clans, or the Briton and the Scot, fought, bled and died during many a score of years of Scottish history.



The author takes pleasure in acknowledging his obligations to Miss Bettie Miller Blackwell, of Oakspring, Fauquier County, Virginia, for much of the material that is in this book.

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CHAPTER I.

OLD FAUQUIER.

The prelude of our story is back in the reign of that corpulent King, George the Third, who, so Lord Chatham wrote, "cared only for two things: the state of his reigning mistress' health, and what he was going to have for dinner." This obese monarch thought less of his American possessions than he did of a haunch of mutton. Nevertheless, the colonies were, even then, a fair domain; and many of His Majesty's loyal subjects lived happily in the Old Dominion, although to the average Englishman, as well as to the King, this land was only a "far countree across the sea;" and, outside of the coast towns, a veritable *terra incognita* inhabited by warlike savages, dangerous beasts, and poisonous reptiles.

From 1700 to 1770, while Europe was engaged in a succession of wars, internecine as well as racial, the colony of the Old Dominion was thriving and prospering amazingly, her tobacco a Pactolean stream which brought wealth to her people.

The planters of Fauquier, like those of the Tide-

water section, were devoted adherents of the King; and this was but natural, as the Old Dominion had been for years the Mecca of the adventurous younger sons of noble birth, just as Canada and Africa are today their rendezvous.

A recent number of the *Westminster Review* contained the following: "The old English law of entail, passing the title and hereditaments to the eldest son, made him *multum*, and his brothers *parvo*, and there were but two roads for these juniors to take: they could become soldiers, sailors, or clergymen, and with luxurious tastes and stinted pay, live a shabby-genteel existence. The other road was across the seas, and of course the reliant and bold emigrated to Virginia, the richest jewel of the Crown, and this Virginia was by all rights entitled to the name of New England; but the Puritans called the cold, rock-bound shores bordering the Atlantic, by that title, though the settlement of Virginia antedated that of Massachusetts." So it came that the names of the old families of Fauquier County are good old English and Scotch. Virginia was intensely Tory. Nearly every county was named after blood royal. There was Alexandria, after Alexander the youngest son of the Earl of Sterling; Augusta, after the Queen; Albemarle, after the gracious Duke Amherst; another duke, Bedford; still another duke, Botetourt, after My Lord the Governor General; Brunswick, after the noble house; and Buckingham, after the most dissolute peer in England; Chesterfield was called after

that man-of-the-world who boasted that "he had manners but no heart;" Charlotte, after the Queen; Charles City, after the pleasure-loving monarch called "The Butterfly King;" Cumberland, after the Duke; and so on through the alphabet.

When King George continued to treat his colonies as he did Ireland, a change took place in the hearts of the gentry, and when Patrick Henry, the "man of the hour," ended his impassioned speech in the Hall of Burgesses at Williamsburg, the Tories were changed into ardent Patriots, and Henry's battle-cry, "Give me liberty or give me death," became the tocsin of the men of Fauquier, irrespective of occupation, creed or wealth. And in a mass-meeting in the old town hall of Warrenton the people pledged their lives, their honor, and their swords to aid the Colonists against the Crown.

How old Fauquier sent her best and bravest to serve under Washington is a matter of record; and if there was a Benedict Arnold or a Tory amongst the Patriots of that glorious county it has never been chronicled. One incident of their loyalty to their cause is but a type of many: Elias Edmonds was a beardless lad at the outbreak of the Revolution, and was elected lieutenant of a company. He marched away to join the army, and later was reported killed in battle, and his family mourned him as dead. Some seven years after, when the whole country was celebrating the surrender of Lord Cornwallis' Army at Yorktown, there strolled into the yard at "Edmonds" (the name of the planta-

tion) a full-bearded man, youthful but with the carriage and port of one much older. He wore the picturesque uniform of a full colonel of the Continental Army, a position won, in those days, only by gallantry on the field. The Edmonds gazed upon the handsome colonel as he made some casual inquiry, but not a member of the household recognized in the knightly soldier the smooth-faced boy they had so long mourned as dead. The colonel having sheathed his sword at Yorktown, became a successful planter, reared a large family, and, as the story books say, "lived happily ever after." His grandson was a gallant soldier in a Virginia regiment during the Civil War. No doubt many thoughts thronged the colonel's mind as he sat by his camp fire at Valley Forge; many visions he had while gazing at the stars at Yorktown, but in his wildest dreams he could not have pictured the wonderful changes his beloved State, and his descendants, would pass through. Truth is stranger than fiction. From the doughty rebel of the Revolutionary War, let us pass to another Rebel, bearing his name, his great great-grandson, Elias Edmonds, whom we find a prisoner at the Old Capitol in 1863. He tried to escape, was detected and carried to Point Lookout, Maryland, handcuffed, and guarded by negro soldiers, and would have been hanged but for the intervention of a Federal officer who was married to a relative of the Rebel prisoner.

The Spartans taught their sons three things: to ride, to shoot, and to tell the truth, and the Revolutionary

soldiers trained their boys along the same lines. When Lafayette came back to America on a visit long after the Revolution, he was entertained at a banquet in the town hall of Warrenton by his old comrades in arms. The gallant Frenchman's toast was: "To the people of Fauquier! brave soldiers in times of war, good citizens in times of peace, and intelligent patriots at all times." But *place aux dames!* Chief Justice Marshall, of Virginia, followed him, and the sentiment he gave, "The women of Fauquier, born to bloom and show us virtue in its form!" was received with such cheers that the very windows rattled.

In the North the rich man invests his spare cash either in stocks, bonds, or handsome residences. In the South, in the old days, the man of means bought land, and the greater number of acres he possessed the higher his prestige. There were many fine estates founded by the English settlers, which descended from father to son, until the beginning of the Civil War. There was Leeton Forest, the home of Charles Lee ~~of the Revolution~~; but there being no male heir the estate passed to the female branch, who married a Presbyterian minister from the North, named Pollock, and the result of this union was four lovely girls. Roberta, the youngest, was styled by Scott who wrote "Mosby's Life," the greatest heroine in the South, for she saved the Partisans from great danger.

A few miles away was Oakview, the estate of the Morsons; a great stone house built in the Tudor style,

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set in the midst of a grove of royal English oaks. In this mansion there lived three maidens, as winsome and sweet as could be found on this habitable globe.

There was the home of the Blackwells; a place where its owner, Mrs. De Ruyter Blackwell, kept open house for any soldier wearing the gray; and any homeless refugee. De Ruyter Blackwell was a poet, one of those who really was touched by the Divine fire, and his two books of poems were to be found beside the Bible in every Fauquier home.

The list of the old Colonial estates within the limits of Mosby's Confederacy would fill pages; but after the war the majority of the people were land poor; they were rich in acres, but slim of purse, and the inevitable result followed: the large estates were either sold in entirety or divided by the heirs and disposed of in smaller lots. If there is today a single estate of the original owner's that remains intact, I have never heard of it. The old feeling of keeping the landed possessions in the family vanished when grim poverty knocked at the door. Among the yeomanry it was different; their small farms were tilled by sons following father since the Revolution, and the descendants of those sturdy English, Irish and Germans are there today.

Among the early English and Scotch-Irish settlers who received grants of lands within a few miles of Warrenton were the Chappalears, Blackwells, Caldwelles, Diggs, Morsons, Jennings, Hoovers, Campbells,

Lees, Scotts, Turners, Hamiltons, Edmunds, Morgans, Moreheads, and many others. The people of Fauquier were mostly of high grade; they had wealth, lineage, and their ideals were high, and they squared up to them, and for nearly a century this little commonwealth enjoyed its life, living liberally, laughing joyously, riding fearlessly, seeing little of the seamy side of things, and cultivating those virtues which go to make a people face, undaunted and serene, any adversity or danger that may arise. These people little imagined that their fair land was to be a "dark and bloody ground," and that these fair descendants of the Revolutionary heroes would be subjected, for years, to such ordeals as tried the souls of the women of Carthage or tested the devotion of the maids of Saragossa.

CHAPTER II.

"THE DEBATABLE LAND."



The great Civil War covered a wide area. Every Confederate State was the scene of battles and skirmishes, and the warm, rich blood of Anglo-Saxons and Celts soaked the Southern soil from the Potomac to the Brazos. Only one distinctively Northern State (Pennsylvania) heard the

“—fitful cymbal’s clash
And the growl of the sullen guns.”

For ages to come the Southland will be the theme of the historian, the poet, and the novelist. The siege of Troy was the inspiration of geniuses for hundreds of years, and not until this crime-stained earth shall cease to revolve on its axis will the “Iliad” fail to stir the pulse of adolescent youth and cause many a dreamer to “wake to ecstasy the living lyre.”

The historian narrates in their order events and facts often monotonous; but the novelist creates his plot, and then gives us the people as they lived, and describes the surroundings with absolute fidelity; hence, Walter Scott has done more to arouse the national pride of Scotia with his matchless sketches of Lowlander and Highlander than Macauley with his history of Scotland.

The pen of Albert Bitozius and of Berthold Auerbach has accomplished more to unify Germany into one nation than have all the proclamations of kings or the edicts of emperors.

In our own country it is to the pen of Simms that we owe our pride in the achievements of Marion with his "Swamp Foxes" (as Tarleton called them), partisans who followed Marion and Sumter.

The aboriginal American Indian would be but a myth but for the genius of Cooper; "Leatherstockings" and the men of the frontier will live as long as America.

When a second Walter Scott shall rise to portray the splendid endurance of the Southern people in the early sixties, and paint in vivid colors the romance and sentiment of grim-visaged war, he will choose the spot most crowded with incident; and when from histories, books and old newspapers will be caught the very "spirit and body of the times," he will enthrall humanity and charm the world with tales of "dare and do," and prove that the highest type of woman was the Southern girl of the sixties.

Now what region would the novelist choose for an

historical novel? Many Southern States (the Carolinas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Missouri, and especially Tennessee) would claim the honor; but there is one section in Virginia that presents such pre-eminent claims that none can dispute her right, and that spot belonged to Mosby's Confederacy, as the theater of his operations is called. This "Debatable Land" was the theater where the most stirring and sensational war drama was played. This region comprises the four counties of Fairfax, Prince William, Culpeper and Fauquier, and within its boundaries occurred the first skirmish, when Captain Marr was killed in the early summer of 1861. The battle of Blackburn Ford took place on July 18, 1861, and the battle of Manassas was fought three days later. Then followed the bloody skirmish at Gainesville.

During the next year Mosby's Confederacy was a place of suffering, wounds and death. Stonewall Jackson on August 20 burned Manassas Junction with all Pope's supplies, captured Tyler's Federal brigade, fought the battle of Grovestown for two days, and held Pope at bay until Longstreet got through Thoroughfare Gap; and on the 31st of August occurred one of the bloodiest and most decisive battles of the war. At the Second Bull Run fully twenty thousand men lay killed and wounded on the field. The next year was fought the well-contested battles of Bristow and Mine Run. In June, 1863, occurred the greatest cavalry combats the world ever witnessed. Stuart was en-

gaged in over a half dozen give-and-take cavalry battles, Mosby had over a score, while detached parties and individual scouts had combats by the hundreds.

Certainly if human blood enriches the soil, Mosby's Confederacy should be the garden spot of the world—a place where the dead far outnumbered the living. Fauquier County, however, was pre-eminently the "Debatable Land." Its people were put to severer straits, suffered more and endured more for the Confederacy, than any community of civilized people ever did in the annals of mankind. John Esten Cooke, the Southern novelist, and Captain King, the Northern writer, chose this region for their scene of action, and they are but the pioneers of romance.

Fairfax and Prince William Counties were strongly garrisoned by Federal forces, and Culpeper was generally occupied by Confederate forces; but Fauquier was the dark and bloody ground of Virginia, and for three years it was the headquarters of Mosby and his partisans; and the wild forays, the midnight dashes upon the enemy's camps, the swoops upon the Federal railroads, and the wild, mad charges on the Union wagon-trains all had their origin in old Fauquier. All the Federal plunder and the prisoners gathered in by the partisans were disposed of within this county.

The County of Fauquier is about fifty miles from the National Capital, and is one of the largest and richest counties in the State. It is about thirty miles long by twenty miles wide; it is bounded on the north

by Loudon, on the south by Stafford, on the east by Prince William, and on the west by Culpeper and Rapahannock Counties.

Fauquier County is much diversified, with its hills and rich valleys, and the whole region is highly cultivated and occupied by well-to-do and refined people. The middle part of the county is a famous farming section. The southern part is flat land of poor quality, and mostly occupied by the yeomanry. It was in the northern part of Fauquier that Mosby often made his headquarters, though if it can be truly said of any man—freebooter or cavalryman, partisan or swashbuckler—that “his headquarters were in the saddle,” that man was Mosby.

There was not a house in old Fauquier that did not have its war history; every one of them had its latch-string hanging outside the door for the gray jackets; all of them were searched by detachments of Federal scouting parties, and many of the Black Horse men and Mosby's men made running fights and dashes for liberty as the Bluecoats surrounded one place or another. The whole fruitful county, which in the beginning of the war was gemmed with fine gardens, well-tilled farms, and princely estates, for three long years lay untouched by plow, harrow or hoe, and abandoned so far as labor and tillage were concerned. The busy hum of industry, the melodious chorus of the blacks in the corn-shucking, the rhythmic music of the cradles as they swung their steel blades through the golden wheat,

the cracking of the wagons loaded with grain, were no more heard. The region was a desert where silence reigned; the once fruitful fields were in parts grown up in their primeval wilds; great stretches of pine coppice were on every side, and these coverts were the favorite lurking places of the scouts. The Federals never penetrated their depths, and if rebel scouts fleeing for life could strike the pines, they were safe.

The lower part of Fauquier County was nearly always occupied by the Federal troops. The old Orange and Alexandria Railroad was the only source of supply of the Army of the Potomac when advancing; and when they went into winter quarters their camps were stretched along the railroad from Alexandria to the Rappahannock River.

In winter time the Black Horse of the Fourth Virginia Cavalry, which was raised in Fauquier County, was always sent to the "Debatable Land" to get fresh mounts and to do all the damage they could to the enemy. The Black Horse gained Mosby much of his reputation, and some of his ablest officers were taken from the ranks of this crack company.

CHAPTER III.

OLD TIMES COME AGAIN NO MORE.

From the end of the Revolutionary War of 1776 to the beginning of the Civil War of 1861, a period of eighty-five years, the planters of Fauquier, Loudon and Prince William Counties led a life which was as perfect, as rounded and as contented as that of any community on this terrestrial globe. The section was purely agricultural. These country Virginians cultivated their lands, raised fine horses and enjoyed their domestic life; their home was their castle, and hospitality one of the cardinal virtues, the latchstring hanging always outside the door.

These planters lived in an atmosphere untainted with moral malaria; they were shielded from the heart-hardening, conscience-searing process of holding their own in fierce business conflicts. They were not taught to be "en garde" against every man; the doctrine of "dog eat dog" they had never heard of except in an indefinite way. "The insolence of office, the proud man's contumely, and the spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes," was to them only a poet's fancy, not a grim, saturnine fact. Race hatred had not then been engendered, and its hydra head, spitting poison,

was a thing inconceivable; and that malignant ulcer on the body politic, the negro preacher, who claimed to be at one end of the heavenly telephone with the Almighty at the other, had not then made his baleful appearance; and the calm, clear stillness of night was not disturbed by his raucous voice, haranguing upon the wrongs of his race, and proclaiming the doctrine, "I'm as good as you is," and social equality. There was in the surroundings everything to elevate public morals; corruption in office was unknown; the mad rush for wealth had not then begun, and the almighty dollar was not the monarch before whom every man bowed. These country Virginians tilled their rich lands that never failed, reared their cattle, planted their corn and wheat, bred their fine horses, and lived a life of contented ease, which we of the strenuous present can hardly understand. In truth their lines were cast in pleasant places.

Though uneventful, the life of these planters was not dull, being fully occupied with domestic duties. Sunday was really a day of rest, and nearly all were regular in their attendance at church, and every man in the county made it a point to be in town during court day, which convened the first Monday in every month, for it was there and then that the county business was transacted, and the town was for the nonce a regular farmers' club, the only one, by the way, they ever attended. Here social engagements were made, healths pledged, toasts drank, and whiskey flowed like water, as it usually does where Anglo-Saxons congregate in

crowds. In the summertime many families who were fond of festivity spent several months at the springs; the White Sulphur and the Old Sweet being favorites. Those who could not afford the expense, or did not care for fashionable life, could ride, in a few hours, to the famous Fauquier White Sulphur, situated on the banks of the Rappahannock, a charming resort, where many of Virginia's best and bravest met. There were two fine hotels in the place, but which were burnt during the war. I recollect seeing them in flames when I was a foot-soldier in Pickett's Division, our army being at that time on the south banks of the river, and our foemen, the Army of the Potomac, on the north side.

In *ante bellum* days Fauquier County was a great sporting community, not of the Baden Baden or Monte Carlo type, nor yet of the Epsom color; but it was of the kind of sport which Frank Forester and gentle Sir Isaac Walton loved. Nearly every mansion had its setters and pointers and hounds, and a day's ride would carry the sportsmen and fishermen to choice hunting grounds. Quail piped in every field, while a few miles away, in the slashes of the Wilderness, there were unnumbered deer. Nearly every lad in the section knew how to handle a gun, and there were hundreds of crack marksmen who supplied the planters with game. But the strongest attribute of these people was their inherent love of fine horses; and as this section was an ideal one for stock, their blooded horses were unequaled in America, save, perhaps, the blue grass region

of Kentucky. The descendants of Flying Childers, Eclipse and Planet were to be found on every Fauquier plantation.

The women of Mosby's Confederacy who are alive today look back to the life of half a century ago with the same intense longing that filled the heart of the royal *emigre* for the old regime before the days of the Terror.

In that golden time, prior to the Civil War, for the maidens of Fauquier life was as free from care as it is possible to be in this mundane sphere. They were taught to be truthful, high-minded, courteous and charitable; were refined, both by blood and training. Womanhood was held in such reverence and esteem as would cause wonder in these days of woman's suffrage; every one of the fair sex expected and received respectful devotion from the men; rudeness to a woman was an unforgivable sin.

So much has been written about the *ante bellum* darkey that the subject has become hackneyed, and people are simply tired of it. Playwright, poet and novelist have all tried a 'prentice's hand at describing and limning him. When a Southerner, brought up with him, treats of the theme, he does so with full knowledge and understanding of his subject; but when a Northerner writes a novel and introduces Sambo he is a novel creature indeed, an impossible darkey, generally a cross between an angel and a white gentleman; a creation about as true as Cooper's "Noble Red Man."

Personally, I have never believed in slavery, even in my youth, though I was heir to a score of slaves. I have always opined that every man's body was his own to do with as he would, but if there was one bright spot in the sombre mantle of slavery it was Fauquier County. The farmers of Fauquier held their slaves by love rather than fear. They had steady but easy work; there was no driving; none of the brutality portrayed in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." A gentleman in Fauquier would have lost prestige if it were known that he ill-treated his slaves who, be it said, were never overtaxed; their food was abundant, every family having their own garden, chickens and hogs. Their holidays were many. They were well clothed and had not a care on their minds, for they knew if they were to fall sick they would receive the same care as one of the master's own family, and they knew nothing of that haunting fear of being in want in their old age, for there was evidence on every plantation of the aged and infirm whose waning life was but a summer holiday.

The North did not care for the negro *per se*. It was the institution they disliked. "Bob" Ingersoll, in a lecture in Washington, said that the Northern people were not willing that the South should reap all the benefit of slavery while the North received nothing, but had to share equally with the South the stigma before the world.

It is no wonder that the hard-fisted, hard-headed workingmen north of Mason and Dixon's line envied

and disliked the Southern gentry, born as it were with "a golden spoon in their mouths," living a life of glorious ease and contentment, while with the Northern existence was a continual struggle, and the "survival of the fittest" was the law and the prophet. I have no personal knowledge of the condition of the slaves in the more Southern States, but in Virginia I am positive that there were no serfs in the whole world whose lives were so happy and free from care as that of the negro of that State; and as for Fauquier County, it was, in the parlence of that time, a veritable "nigger Heaven." I have often heard the freedmen from that county say that they would cheerfully forego their liberty and their ballot if they could live as of yore.

When the war swept across the country all agriculture ceased, and when the hands and handmaidens were set free by Lincoln's proclamation the bulk of the negroes were compelled to leave their homes to avoid starvation; but the old mammy and cook were a part of the family, and the proclamation was no more to them than the sighing of the wind amid the tree tops. They shared their masters' adversity as they did their prosperity, and were true to them as the needle to the pole.

It is not stretching the truth to say that in the Piedmont region, at least, the slaves looked up to and revered their masters and their family next to their God.

The abolitionists of the North predicted that when the Southern slave-holder volunteered and went to the

front, leaving his plantation unprotected, the slaves would rise and kill, burn and destroy, as did Nat Turner and his gang in the Southampton insurrection in the thirties.

Certainly if there ever was a chance for a slave-rising it was in Mosby's Confederacy during the second year of the Civil War, before Mosby's Rough Riders were organized. The region was absolutely denuded of men except the aged and infirm. It was the borderland where dwelt only helpless women, whose homes were at the mercy of any desperado. Had the slaves any hatred towards their masters, or any wrongs to avenge, now was the golden opportunity. But the imagined black man with an axe in one hand, a torch in the other, surrounding the silent houses, did not materialize.

In truth the slaves loved and revered their masters and would willingly and gladly have periled their lives for them, and had they been enrolled as soldiers they would have followed them to the cannon's mouth. One of the great mistakes the Confederate Government made was in not enlisting the blacks and giving to them and their families their freedom. The English could neither have conquered India nor held it without their Sepoy contingent. Such a step as making the negro a soldier would have paralyzed the abolitionists, and won the South her independence.

While it is true that many of the youth and manhood of the slaves sided with the North after they had obtained their freedom, the house retainers were as

staunch as steel to their masters. This was brought to the proof time and again in Mosby's Confederacy, when they could have gained what to them was a fortune, by betraying the officers and men of Mosby's command; but they could not be cajoled or compelled. There was not one of the Rough Riders who was not indebted to them for kindnesses, and often for his liberty and his life. It was no uncommon occurrence that when a house was suddenly surrounded by a cordon of cavalry, and the partisans had not time to flee, they were concealed by the servants; and they invariably proved faithful to the trust placed in them. They were sorely tempted at times, but I never heard of but two who succumbed. I have made many inquiries on this subject and have only heard of those two instances that occurred in Mosby's Confederacy during the Civil War.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM INFANTRY TO CAVALRY.

In the late fall of 1863 both armies, the Blue and the Gray, went into winter quarters. The roads, rendered impassable and unjackass-able by the alternate thawing and freezing, made an active campaign out of the question. Strong picket lines were thrown out in front; both flanks were heavily guarded by the cavalry, and the artillery and infantry were moved back into the woods, and the soldiers were told to build their homes to suit themselves; and they did so. Like a newly located mining camp, a city arose in a night; and for four months the two branches of the service had nothing to do but take life easy.

The Black Horse Cavalry was from Farquier County, and when the army had settled into winter quarters the troop was detached to spend the winter and early spring in Mosby's Confederacy. It was like exchanging purgatory for paradise. Think of the difference. Idling and mooning through the long winter months in camp in some shack that would not keep the gentlest zephyr from entering freely, and when old Boreas was on the rampage everything inside was sprinkled with rain or powdered with snow; the ground



ALEXANDER HUNTER.
The Infantry Uniform.

was wet and sappy, the poor half-starved horses tied to the pine trees whinnied their tales of hunger to ears that heard not, for their masters were suffering keener pangs of famine than were the brutes. Three crackers a day and half a pound of rancid pork was the daily rations of the regular army; about one-third of what a hearty man could eat. The horses could gnaw the bark off the trees to deaden the pangs of their hunger, but their masters could not.

The South had no organization like "Old Sanitary" of the North, where thousands of devoted women, backed by the contributions of millions of men, made it their business to pour out unceasing streams of luxuries, clothing, books, and everything that could make the rank and file of their army comfortable and contented in their winter quarters.

The Bluecoats were as a community of well-to-do burghers; the Grayjackets were as a colony of tramps, half-clad and three-quarters starved. The Black Horse Troop, by the waving of the magician's wand, was transplanted into a land, not flowing with milk and honey, but a land of romance, where a man astride a fine horse, with a good six shooter in his holster, never need want; for close by lay his enemy, who had more of the good things of this life than he needed. Then again, the homes of the Black Horse were in Mosby's Confederacy, and the difference between camp life and home is what only a veteran soldier can understand.

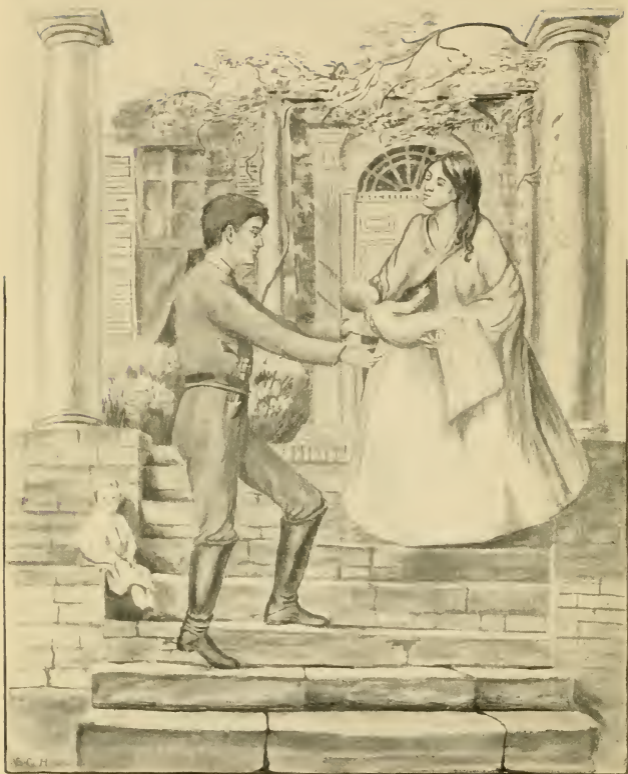
I had been an infantryman for two years, and I knew

all there was to be known of that branch of the service, as did all the footmen who followed Longstreet across the sassafras and broomsedge fields of Manassas, through the majestic gap at Thoroughfare, along the muddy march to Richmond, into the deep sloughs and morass of Yorktown, then back to defend Richmond, thence onward again to the green fields of "My Maryland," only to retrace our steps back to poverty-stricken Orange County, and to historic Fredericksburg, where it was my privilege to witness the grandest charge ever made by mortal men, that of Meagher's brigade of Irishmen against Marye's Heights. Then on to Suffolk, marching often barefoot, infested with vermin, almost naked, tramping with shoulders sore with carrying a heavy musket, hips galled with toting a full cartridge box, often mad with hunger, faint with thirst, tramp! tramp! tramp! up one hill and down another, breathing nothing but dust and battle smoke; seeing nothing but the sheen of the bayonets, hearing nothing but the beat of the long roll or the roar of the cannon. Oh, yes! I had been through it all; and this footing it up and down and all around, bound by iron discipline, made me sigh and long with all my mind and soul for a trooper's life. I had see-sawed and traversed old Virginia on two legs, and I wanted with all my might to travel on four. Then, too, there was no romance in being an infantryman. No swashbuckler or cavalier of my reading ever toiled along on shank's mare. The Paladins all bestrode fiery steeds; the heroes of all the

wars always wore spurs; certainly if Charles O'Malley had been a foot soldier he never would have been written up in the book that sent more boys to the army than ever Robinson Crusoe inspired with a love for the sea. How many infantrymen tried to get into the cavalry will never be known; probably all, or nearly all. The soldier, if he had a pull, first sent his application to his captain, who approved it; it was then in turn approved by the colonel commanding the regiment, and was then forwarded to the brigadier, who endorsed it and sent it to the division general, whose approval or disapproval depended altogether on the state of his liver; then it was sent to the corps commander, and finally to the commander-in-chief. No wonder that poor Johnny Reb, whose stomach was empty and his soul full of longing, grew despondent and let his musket rust. He felt that he was so little, and yet the powers that be made so much of him; but it did not make him proud, as Mr. Toots would say quite the contrary.

To step from the regular army, with its forms and its discipline into Mosby's Confederacy, was like going from Hades to Elysium. There were no forms in this soldier's Paradise; no despots, no provost marshal puffed up with bombastic pride; no brigadiers with their uniforms, from cap to boots, filled with bones, flesh and egotism instead of blood. No, the Debatable Land was governed, controlled and managed by King Mosby, the only monarch North America ever possessed; a king without a crown, without robes of state, without even a

sword at his side. Such a king was never heard of before; but like Robin Hood and his merry men, and the Highlander Rob Roy, he could exclaim, "My foot is on my native heath." Kings all, not by divine right, but by the right of the bow, the steel and the pistol. In their realm, like Crusoe, they could exclaim, "I am monarch of all I survey; my rights, few dare to dispute them."



Brought Little Children to Kiss Us.

CHAPTER V.

THE HEROINES OF FAUQUIER, HOW THEY LIVED, WHAT THEY ENDURED.

In 1863, as I have said, I obtained a transfer from the infantry to the Black Horse Cavalry, and spent the winters of 1863, 1864 and 1865 in old Fauquier, and though I recall many stormy scenes, yet the most vivid picture my memory retains is that of the noblest, truest, most patriotic women who ever lived.

Picture to yourself the scene of those long years. The country seemed to lie under a curse; the country roads were covered with grass, weeds and sprouts; the ditches on either side a bed of briars; no ground was tilled; no sound save the sighing of the wind among the tree-tops; no animate creature to be seen anywhere, save perhaps, a passing glimpse of a horseman who disappeared before one could raise his eyes for a second glance. In truth, the Debatable Land was the abomination of desolation. A man traveling through that section was in more danger in those days than a rich burgher in passing through Hounslow Heath when Dick Turpin and Claude Duval held high sway. In fact, a scout traversing Fauquier County carried his life in his hands.

The Federal Secret Service, with unlimited means, had equipped a battalion of picked men, dressed them in the Confederate uniform, whose business it was to mix with the people, pass themselves off as Rebel scouts, and gain all the information they could. They were known as the *Jessie Scouts*, and though fearless, daring men, they ran desperate risks for the high pay. They had forged passes, furloughs and details, and met with some success at first, as they gained full and accurate information as to Mosby's command and the Black Horse; but their manners, their talk and their accent betrayed them. Many a time, solitary and alone, have I gone to some house for shelter and food, and received but cold courtesy; but after undergoing a close examination a wonderful change would take place, and I would be welcomed as one who was near and dear.

Many of these *Jessie Scouts* disappeared from the face of the earth; and when a Confederate cavalryman met another cavalryman it was with cocked revolver, and explanations were in order; if they were not satisfactory, then and there was a duel to the death.

I came within an ace of losing my life once because the girls of Mrs. Johnson's family mistook me for a *Jessie Scout*. It was the day after Christmas of 1864; the Federal General Merritt made a grand raid to celebrate the holidays, but it was a water-haul. A detachment of the Black Horse hung on his flank and rear, picking up stragglers. When going down a steep hill full speed my mare fell and cut her knee to the bone.

I dismounted and led her to a house about a mile away. All the Black Horse men wore the blue Yankee overcoat, and when the ladies saw me approaching they naturally thought I was a Federal. I tied my mare and went to the house, and was received like a tax collector. I tried to explain the situation to one of them, the rest having left her to entertain me while they were hiding their valuables. In a few moments the three girls (and they were beautiful girls) burst into the parlor and said: "If you are a Confederate soldier you had better surrender, for the Yankees are all around the house." I rushed to the porch and saw a squad tying their horses to the palings of the fence. I ran down the hill, intending to reach the woods about a hundred yards away, when the sergeant in charge rode at me full tilt and cut me off. He dismounted and threw up his carbine. I had only my army Colt's. The cap of his gun snapped. This enabled me to reach the woods; but they got my horse.

Often a party of us would stop at some lone farmhouse in the dead of night; after an interval a light would gleam, and the white faces of a group of women would be seen huddled together for safety. Then, no matter what the hour, they would start a fire and cook us a frugal meal. How those people lived, God only knows. In the lower part of the county there was no poultry, no hogs or meat of any kind; for a Federal raid would sweep the barn, the pens and the smoke-house clean. In summertime they had their gardens

and vegetables, but in winter the common diet was cow-beans and corn bread.



The closed season for three years had filled the country with game, but bird and beast, except the rabbit, were safe. Ah! those old hares! (known as Stafford mutton) what a

blessing they were to those unfortunate non-combatants, cooped up within Mosby's Confederacy! The boys and girls had traps set all around the place, and rabbit roasted, rabbit fried, rabbit hash, and rabbit *fricassee*, was the prevailing cuisine. The people living near the Federal camps fared better, for in all truth and honor to the soldiers in blue, they would give to the country people mess pork and hardtack; and when they broke camp there would be left quantities of provisions, which the soldiers freely bestowed upon those who came flocking from far and wide to share in the spoil. But for these supplies most of the people along the railroad would actually have died of starvation.

The Muse of History has written on her scroll the gallant deeds and the endurance of the Black Horse Cavalry; but in heroic endurance they cannot compare with the women of old Fauquier. It is impossible for the average American of today, as he sits in his own home, with his family and friends around him, with civilization encompassing him, he and his protected by

law, to understand or to picture the existence that the delicate, refined women of Mosby's Confederacy led for three years. They were absolutely alone in their dwellings. Every man capable of bearing arms or act in the department was in the service. There was but little visiting among the neighbors except in case of dire necessity. There were no churches open, no entertainments to relieve the somber lives they led. There were no stores where they might purchase clothes or groceries, no mail, no letters except delivered by some friendly hand, no social intermingling to shorten the long hours of the winter nights, and just think of it! no fashion to give joy to the feminine hearts. The negroes, as a rule, had long ago left, and these delicate women had to cut wood and carry it home on their shoulders, bring water, and work in their gardens. They cut the hay and cultivated corn patches in some obscure spot where a scouting party would not be likely to find it.

Many women today would feel nervous and frightened if they had to remain in a house without a male protector, even though they knew that law and order reigned and that constables and police were watching over their safety with sleepless vigilance. Think, then, what they would feel today in a lone country home, in a region between two great armies, with the knowledge that there were soldiers constantly passing through the country, deserters and bounty jumpers, vicious, unprin-

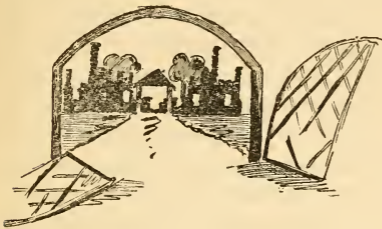
ciplcd, and unmitigated scoundrels from the two armies on their way South or North, as it might happen their army was encamped! Think of sitting huddled around a fire, with no light save that of a sputtering tallow dip, listening with fearful ears for the coming of—God knows what! Think, matron and maid, what would be the state of your feelings to be awakened out of a fitful slumber by the noise of some one tapping on the window pane, and then a long silence; or to hear the sudden knocking at the door!

Such was often the experience of those women of old Fauquier, who, when the knocking came, would hurriedly light the candle, and with throbbing heart and shaking hands huddle on their clothes, and with lagging feet, almost blind with fear, go to answer the summons, and with horrid fancies rioting through their brain unlock the door, turn the knob, and open it to see—Heaven knows what!

Think, women of this fair land, who imagine you are unhappy, with your petty trials and trivial troubles; think of the suffering, the tribulations that the women of the Debatable Land endured for three long years. Yet not a word of complaint or despair fell from their lips.

Those heroic women literally lived from hand to mouth, only too thankful that they had a roof to cover their heads. They existed in a strained state of expectancy, not knowing what one day would bring forth. And this is no fancy sketch, for traveling on horseback

through this region after Lee's surrender, from Culpeper Court House to Fairfax Station, I did not see a



dozen houses in a ride of forty miles along the railroad track. As far as the eye could reach the only signs of human habitation

were lone chimneys—war's tombstones marking the spot where once had been happy homes.

None but a survivor of the Civil War can comprehend the life the people of Mosby's Confederacy lived. Most of them subsisted on the barest necessities. Setting the table was often a hollow farce, and grace before meat was but a bitter burlesque. In their daily prayers for daily bread they usually added: "and a little meat too, O Lord!" There was no tea, coffee, sugar or milk, no preserves or pickles, no bread except the corn pone or hard-tack. If one was taken ill, there was no doctor to drive up in his family gig to bring hope and comfort. There were no medicines except the herbs of the field. The isolation from all humankind, the blind ignorance of the future, the seasons that came and went, the long winter nights, and those lingering summer days so spun out that it seemed as though a modern Joshua had commanded: "Thou sun, stand

still!" And the mid-summer times of dread! for the women knew that the active campaign was in full swing, and that the Blue and the Gray were in mortal combat; that their friends and relatives were in dire danger, and that, cut off from the world as they were, they must pass days, weeks, even months perhaps, hoping, doubting, and fearing as to whether their loved ones were alive or dead, and the brooding care and intense, anxious thought made their very souls sicken. Yet in their darkest hour of despair if you asked them, "If you could, would you end it all by submission?" the flash of the eye, the angry red in the cheek was answer enough. It would seem as though the Brahma creed is correct in that suffering purifies and eliminates the grosser passions, for these women stood calm and dauntless in every storm, and all the "slings and arrows" hurled at them by "outrageous fortune" failed to conquer or break them. Their faith was strong, their hearts brave, and they smiled through their tears. Yes, they loved their State next to their religion, and to their adored cause they were as

"True as the dial to the sun."

I have seen the women of Fauquier in war times in many situations, and on life's stage, in the bloody drama of the Civil War, they played many parts. I have seen many a delicately nurtured girl performing the coarsest manual labor; I have seen them staggering through the

forest with heavy bundles of fagots on their backs; I have seen them with blistered hands trying to cut knotty wood with a dull ax, and wished that I was a second Briareus and had a thousand arms to offer them instead of only two; I have seen them cooking food for the soldiers long after midnight, with the drum and bugles of the enemy sounding in their ears; for hours I have watched them sitting under the shade of the trees, knitting socks or plaiting straw for their summer hats, and even making footwear from the tops of the cavalry boots, and turning out dresses from antique stuffs that had been heirlooms for I know not how many generations; I have seen these same girls dressed in gowns made from the blue overcoats of the cavalry; I have seen them standing for hours on the roof with spyglass in hand, watching the movements of the foe; I have seen them speeding through brake and brier, forest and fallow, to give the alarm to some neighbor who, they knew, was entertaining Confederate soldiers; I have watched them in the role of veritable picket guards, as they kept watch and ward whilst the tired, overworked soldier slept throughout the livelong night under their roof-tree. Many a time I have slipped into some house for shelter and warmth during a bitter winter's night and dropped into peaceful slumber, though the camp of the foe was not a musket shot off, feeling secure and safe, "knowing that the girls were on guard" and would not close their eyes or relax their vigilant watch until the first dawn of day should lighten the distant moun-

tain top. I have watched them with reverent wonder as they bound up the wounds of some soldier, at the same time conquering their sickness of heart over the spurting blood and mangled bones. I have seen them when they received the news of the death of some loved one, their heart's dearest, who gave his life to the cause he loved, and they met the blow as did the Roman matrons who said: "Return with thy shield, or upon it." They quivered for a time under the stroke, but never gave way to unrestrained, hopeless grief nor to unavailing despair; they only grew more defiant, more bitter and irreconcilable. I have seen them on their knees praying to Almighty God to give success to the cause they loved better than life.

There were some timid, cowardly men in Fauquier County (we had a half dozen in the Black Horse, and there were a score or more of buttermilk rangers who kept dodging in the bushes, arrant poltroons whose greatest achievement was robbing some Federal deserter); but among the women, high-bred and ill-bred, educated and illiterate, the pampered child of fashion, and the cruel sport of fortune high and low, there was the same spirit animating them all. I never in all those trying years met a woman in old Fauquier who counseled surrender to the foe. The women for years saw only the sterner, sorrowful side of life; they heard only talk of war and things of war; tales of warlike deeds, of deadly daring, "of hairbreadth escapes by flood and field," of the melee, the fighting hand to hand excited

their imagination and fired their blood. The small details that go to fill up the average woman's existence were not theirs. Instead, the martial air they breathed, their thoughts, their dreams—all were tinged with war, and so they learned to love and admire personal bravery in a man beyond and above all else.

Many a happy hour have I spent during the long winter evenings with these matrons and maidens, and the contrast between their firesides and the bivouac of the half-starved, gaunt troopers in camp was to a soldier the difference between Paradise and Purgatory. Yet I noticed one thing: it was no use to try soft dalliance or to play the Claude Melnotte with them; no matter what subject was broached, they would invariably bring the conversation round to the war. It was the one absorbing, enthralling topic, and nothing else gained or held their attention. How they flattered, and what homage they paid the soldier who had performed some special act of bravery, and they treated him as though it had been done for their own especial benefit! Many a gray-jacketed Othello charmed the ears and won the heart of some Fauquier Desdemona by his tale of deadly daring.

These girls had proposals a-plenty. The soldiers did not waste time in their devoirs; they did not know how long they were to live, as lives were cheap in those days; but the women would not listen to such talk. "Drive these people away, and when the war is over we will then have time enough to listen to these tales,"

was the unvarying reply to the oaths, declarations and entreaties of their lovers to marry them. These women knew, as did their officers, that a soldier newly wedded was a soldier spoiled, for his heart would not be in his work. By their words and example the scout's soul was elevated, his heart beat stronger, and he became more reckless and more daring.

It was a Fauquier tot of three summers who was sent to visit her aunt in Boston just after the war ended, and just before going to bed on the night of her arrival she knelt down to say her prayers and ask Providence's blessing for General Lee and Jeff Davis. When she ended, her aunt said, "Mollie, the war is over now and



we are one people, and you must pray for the Yankees, too." Obediently, the little, white-clad form sank back to her knees, and raising her hands said: "O Lord, bress the damn Yankees, too."



ONE OF MOSBY'S RANGERS.

CHAPTER VI.

THE KING OF THE DEBATABLE LAND.

American historians have never done justice to Mosby. He was in warfare what Poe was in literature: absolutely unique; and like Poe his fame will grow.

It was an Englishman, Colonel Henderson, that discerned the genius of Stonewall Jackson, and lifted him from an able corps commander (as modern historians ranked him) and placed him on a pedestal for all time to come as one of the greatest masters of the art of warfare that ever lived. Some foreign military student, with cool, critical eye, will some day study the tactics of Mosby and will accord him the praise of having accomplished more with his limited resources than any cavalryman who ever swung himself into the saddle. What he could have done had he been situated like Morgan, Van Dorn or Wheeler, can only be conjectured. His capabilities were unlimited. Like Stonewall Jackson, he never recalled his orderly after he had issued a command, and like Jackson, his intuition was like lightning. In the hurly-burly of frenzied conflict he was as cool and calm as though the clash of arms was a holiday show, and his eagle eye could gather in at one glance the real situation, and it was this mar-

velous gift that enabled him to extricate his command from a score of conflicts, whereas a mere fighter would have gone under.

The people of Fauquier believed implicitly in Mosby and his men had unbounded faith in him.

When I recall Mosby as I saw him for the first time at the head of his battalion in the little village of Salem in old Fauquier, in the autumn of 1863, splendidly mounted, his lithe, elegant form attired in a showy new uniform, slouch hat with gilt cord, and sweeping plume shading his clean-cut, cameo face, I thought of the days "when knighthood was in flower," and that he was the knightliest of them all. He was the beau idéal of a *beau sabreur*—a Centaur, Mars, and Apollo all in one.

Many men during the Civil War had unlimited power for a brief period, as did Butler at New Orleans, and Burbridge in Kentucky; and impartial history has summed up the good and evil resulting therefrom, but there has never been an instance in free America where a man was greater in his realm, for two whole years, than czar or sultan. Mosby, a classical scholar, could in those days have grasped the kingly precept of the Cæsars, and have proclaimed it as his own: "*Roma locuta est causa finita est.*" When he had declared his verdict the die was cast; the law of the Medes and Persians was not more unalterable. When the pale, thin, statuesque soldier, wearing a major's star, unclosed his thin lips and gave an order, not even the

power of the United States nor that of the Confederate States of America could change it within his kingdom. Like Rob Roy, he could exclaim, "I hold my sway from Berwick Brae to Bannockburn," and no doubt he felt the same pride that the Highland chieftain did when he stamped his foot and cried: "My foot is on my native heath and my name is MacGregor."

Scott writes of Mosby in 1864:

"But it is now time to speak of his civil administration. The civil structure in the district over which his power extends had been totally subverted, and there was no law to maintain the recognized rights of property, or to protect the weak from the aggressions of the strong. Finding himself in the possession of power, he regards it as a trust to be exercised for the benefit of those over whom his military jurisdiction extends. To him, as the recognized depository of authority, all men repair, preferring complaints, representations and applications. The ordinary place for the transaction of such business is at a rendezvous for the command, while the men are assembling. But this is not always the case, for he often gives audiences and makes decisions at other places and at other times. Thus Mosby has reigned in the Upper Piedmont for nearly two years undisputed Dictator."

It was Mr. John Marshall of Fauquier County who gave to him the soubrequet of "the King of the Debatable Land." Mr. Marshall was one of the wealthiest and brainiest residents of old Fauquier, and in a

letter to the *Richmond Examiner* he wrote that "Old Fauquier was now under the reign of a king, who heard petitions, settled disputes, and by his justice and legal knowledge gained universal approbation, and that the section of the county had never during the memory of man been so cheaply and ably governed."

The most enthralling chapters of the Revolutionary War are those dealing with the deeds of two great partisan leaders, Marion and Sumpter, and their actions have long been the favorite theme of novelists and poets. It was Marion, called by Tarleton "The Swamp Box," who was the real leader, for Sumpter was only a popular officer. It was the brain of Marion to conceive, and the hand of Sumpter to strike, yet Marion was no more to be compared with Mosby than was Alvarez to Cortez.

Mosby with his battalion, numbering some three hundred fighters, caused more trouble to the Federal Army of the Potomac than any corps in the Confederate Army; and he and his partisans kept over thirty thousand Federals guarding their communications, their railroads, their army posts, their frontier towns and their depots of supplies, when but for this ubiquitous ranger these forces would have been in active service in the field.

I will try to describe this great partisan ranger.

His early life did not foreshadow the checkered career that was to be his. Indeed, up to the outbreak of the Civil War no one could have lead a more simple

and peaceful existence. He was born in Powhatan County, Virginia, on the plantation of his father, some miles above Richmond. Although fond of hunting and early trained to ride and shoot, his was but the ordinary training of the Virginia boys. But even in his youth the fascinations of that mode of warfare, which afterwards made him famous, appealed to his boyish imagination, as appears from the tales of his mother and his faithful old slave. Aaron used to tell how he would lie upon his bed and devour the "Life of General Marion," rolling from side to side, and shouting with glee when he came across some particularly stirring episode in the history of that daring Revolutionary raider; no doubt in after life that budding inspiration blossomed into daring deeds of his own. But his nature was quiet and peaceful. He was also a studious youth, and had a strong predilection for anything Greek. "I was born a Greek," he was often heard to say.

He began his military career by joining the cavalry, and he was soon detailed to Stuart's headquarters as a scout. His first appearance in the limelight was while leading Stuart in his circle around the McClellan army, which was besieging Richmond in 1862. Stuart thought so highly of him that he gave him a small independent command, which was designed more to protect the citizens living on this border than anything else. To defend only was not in Mosby's nature. As well expect the eagle, from his circling beat in the arching skies, to refrain from slanting swoop when he

perceives his quarry. In his spirited book, "Mosby's Rangers," Private James W. Williamson, who was a close personal friend of Mosby, thus describes him:

"Mosby was a brave man, and as a scout he was unsurpassed; he was generally taciturn, particularly towards strangers. At times he was quite talkative, while at others he would scarcely answer a question. He spoke plainly and to the point. Cool in danger, quick to think and practical in carrying out his ideas. These were the qualities which aided materially in his success." And again Mr. Williamson describes the tactics of the partisan leader in a nutshell:

"While the enemy were compelled to guard their lines Mosby had none. When a body of troops was sent in search of him, it was a very easy matter for him to keep out of their way if in heavy force, or to cut off and attack any detachment from the main body, and harass them on the march."

Mosby's tactics were those of a war general: his aim was to puzzle his opponents, to mystify them, to keep them on a constant strain until they became nervous and took counsel of their fears; to have them ill at ease, looking everywhere, expecting, hoping and fearing by turns, was a studied business with him, and he succeeded beyond his hopes. It was the feelings he inspired in his foes more than anything else that accounted for his marvelous success.

Mosby, in his reminiscences, says:

"I endeavored to diminish as far as I was able the aggressive power of the Army of the Potomac, by compelling them to keep a large force on the defensive. I assailed its rear, for there was its most vulnerable point. My men had no camps. If they had gone in camp they would have all been captured. They would scatter for safety and gather at my call like the Children of the Mist. A blow would be struck at a weak or unguarded point, and then a quick retreat. The alarm would spread through the sleeping camp, the long roll would be beaten or the bugle would sound, "To horse," then would be mounting in hot haste and rapid pursuit. But the partisans would get off with their prey. Their pursuers were striking at an invisible foe. I often sent small squads at night to attack and run in the pickets along a line of several miles. I wanted to use up and consume the Northern cavalry by hard work."

In many respects Mosby was exceptional: his power over his Rough Riders was complete, but they did not love him. He did not inspire them with the enthusiastic devotion that Turner Ashby received from his cavalrymen. Major John Scott of Fauquier, Mosby's bosom friend, who, just after the war published a book called "Partisan Life of Mosby," and who obtained nearly all his data from Mosby, says of him:

"You ask if it is by love that Mosby controls his men? No, he is not weak enough to be cheated by that fallacy. Love, he knows, is an inconsistent charmer

whose power, from the nature of things, can not be made to pervade or control large masses of men. Fear and confidence are the Genii he invokes."

Mosby, unlike most leaders of men, had no magnetism; he was as cold as an iceberg, and to shake hands with him was like having the first symptoms of a congestive chill. He was positive, evidence of a self-centered man; and he did not know what human sympathy was. He would have been a Stoic had he lived in Athens in the days of Pericles. The general impression of Mosby is that he was a rough-and-ready, fighting Cracker-Jack, while on the contrary he was a literatus, a classical scholar and a thorough student; but he reminded one strongly of Goldsmith's lines:

"Who wrote like an angel,
But talked like poor Poll."

Mosby was fond of reading the old English literature, and was familiar with Lord Chesterfield's letters; yet, withal, he had the manners of an Indian. His was a fascinating character to study; he was a "stormy petrel," a born soldier, a light cavalryman by instinct, and a partisan who, under no orders, could accomplish wonders, but in the regular army he would, in all probability, never have been heard of. In the piping days of peace he was as a fifth spoke in the wheel, and steady, plodding work was his abomination. He was of the meteoric type. Though cold, indifferent and

utterly self-centered, yet he was the greatest leader of irregular warfare that history or tradition gives to us.

Marion and Sumter had the swamps in which to lie perdu, but the Virginia partisans had no place in which to hide. The nearest swamp was the Great Dismal, over a hundred miles away; there were no caves in which to burrow, no rough inaccessible mountains where they might lose themselves like the brigands in Spain; instead, Mosby's men dwelt in the thickly populated region, with two rivers, the Rapidan and the Rapahannock, in the rear; yet they bade defiance to the whole Federal army, and kept their ranks intact until the close of the war, and was the last organization in Virginia to surrender. What was the secret of their amazing success? It was the women of the Debatable Land.

Even in La Vendee Napoleon found that bribery accomplished more than his armies. Even in Scotland, Wallace was betrayed to his death. But in the Debatable Land there was no traitor; men may have been tempted, but the women were so devoted to their cause that they nipped in the bud any talk of disloyalty to their chief.

The King of Fauquier issued his ukase defining the boundaries of his realm, and also stringent orders that none of his soldiers should stray outside the limits under pain of being sent back under guard to the army, and be drafted as a private. A few of his men disobeyed his mandate, and neither excuse, apology nor influence

availed them. The bounds of his little confederacy were sharply defined by Mosby himself; commencing at Snickersville, along the Blue Ridge Mountains to Loudoun, thence to Salem, thence to the Plains, then following the Bull Run Mountain to Aldie.

There was one crime that Mosby viewed with as much abhorrence as did any settler on the frontier a score of years ago, and that was horse stealing. That evil had reached the limit in Loudoun County, especially among the Quakers who were non-combatants. Mosby sent details of his most trusty men there, with orders to kill the thieves on sight, no matter whether his uniform was blue, gray or civilian. This mandate was carried out literally, and many of these gentry suddenly disappeared from the face of the earth.

Another evil was the manufacturing of liquor, and many a squad was sent into the hidden fastness of the Blue Ridge Mountains to destroy the illicit stills. The soldiers dispatched on this duty left headquarters with ill-concealed joy. Mosby himself never touched a drop—had been a teetotaler since his college days. His specials were supposed to be traveling in that same conveyance, but it must be confessed that they were somewhat like Colonel Byrd Lewis' old darkey, Manuel, who dwelt, in ante bellum days, on a plantation in Henrico. Manuel was a pillar of the church, a general factotum about the farm, and a favorite of the Colonel, but he would get drunk. Again and again

his master had forgiven him, but at last he called him up.

"See here, Manuel, my patience is at an end; you have the easiest time of any darkey on the plantation, but now I'm going to send you back to the field-gang under the overseer."

"Marse Byrd, it's powerful hard work shearing dem sheep, as you know."

"I am not talking of sheep-shearing time, but all the time," responded the Colonel. The darkey scratched his head.

"Now you see here, Marse Byrd, I done make a bargain with you. If I kin drink all I wants to in sheep-shearing time, I won't take no dram no other time; no, sir! I won't touch nary a drop."

"Very well!" answered the Colonel, "it's a bargain; but if you break it, back you go to the gang of field niggers, remember that."

On several occasions old Manuel's actions were very suspicious, and the climax came when he burst the bottom out of a wash-tub when he brought it down over his wife's head. She complained to the Colonel, not on account of her head being hurt, but because her best tub, she said, "was clean done busted."

The Colonel summoned his servant. "Manuel," said he, "forbearance has ceased to be a virtue; now you go and report to the overseer."

"Marse Byrd, ain't a bargain a bargain?"

"It certainly is."

"Den I stands by it."

"And I'll stand by mine. That's enough; report to the overseer."

"See now! Marse Byrd, you done tole me to drink all I want in sheep-shearing time; now I'se done kept my part of de bargain, for every time I wants a dram I go get my shears, hunt up Jupe, that old ram, and take a few clips on him, and I done sheared old Jupe about twenty times since last Christmas."

Now when Mosby's men started to obey orders and destroy the liquor traffic, they did it their own way, and men have a thousand different ways of doing a thing, but these Rangers, like old Uncle Manuel, had only one way to destroy the liquor: they absorbed it at sheep-shearing time.

CHAPTER VII.

MOSBY'S NAME, FAME AND SUCCESS DUE LARGELY TO WOMEN.

It is not too much to say that much of the great fame enjoyed by Mosby was won by the aid of the women of the Debatable Land; and not only because the brilliant partisan leader, and every officer under him, owed his life and erstwhile liberty to those maids and matrons. Many of Mosby's dashing and successful raids were but the outcome of information furnished him by these fair dames.

The history of the world does not present such a spectacle of a community of people, as a unit in thought and feeling, as was true of the Debatable Land. An hour's walk to the Federal lines with information of Mosby's stopping place and the houses where his rangers lay asleep would have made the informer rich. It must be remembered that the partisans had no pickets or videttes, roads were not patrolled, and no guards were set and relieved. A Federal detachment with certain information could have scooped up the whole crowd. But there were none who gave that information. There might have been men in Mosby's Confederacy who were tempted to gain a life's competence

by revealing the partisan's hiding place, but the women—ah, the women! That was a different thing.

History has immortalized Paul Revere, who roused the New Englanders; but Paul was on a fiery steed, and it was a safe and exciting gallop. But there is no history, neither poetry nor song, to tell of the wild adventures of the Fauquier maidens, who, threading their tortuous ways through the woods, bursting through pine coppice, mirey swamps, facing unknown danger to reach some farmhouse and whisper with white lips and panting breath: "The foe! He comes! He comes!"

So the rangers slept peacefully, firm in the faith that their people were true as death to their cause. And their belief was well-founded, for time and again the Federals made night raids, but in every instance without success. A trooper here and there would be gathered in, but the mass, timely warned, would escape in time, and strike the reconnoitering party when they were least expecting it.

The Debatable Land, in the last year of the war, did not occupy a space of more than thirty miles. On the south it was hemmed in by the Federal garrison at Warrenton; on the east were numerous camps of the enemy stretching from Fairfax to Accomac; on the north at Harper's Ferry was General Sullivan's brigade, while on the west the Union forces were always swarming in the Valley.

The partisans, in the center of the Union army, with no safe rendezvous, no line of retreat open, were, ac-

ording to all reasoning, doomed to extinction. But there is a difference between fighting a battalion of partisans and fighting a united people. A soldier may be captured, driven away or killed; but the women and children yet remain, and against them military tactics were as a pin's point against the shield of Peliades. Major Scott cites an interesting instance of these truths when he tells how the "Angel" (as he calls Miss Ratcliffe) saved the partisans.

"Mosby started for Fairfax with the intention of striking a picket-post lying near Frying-pan Church, which proved to be a trap that had been set for him, but from which he was saved by the activity and courage of Miss Laura Ratcliffe. She was informed by a soldier who came to the house to ask for milk that Lieutenant Palmer of the First West Virginia Union Cavalry with a party had placed himself in the pines, near Frying-pan Church, leaving a few of his men in sight of the road as pickets. He added, 'We will surely get Mosby this time. On his next raid he will certainly come by Frying-pan, and it will not be possible for him to escape. I tell you this, though I know you would give Mosby any information in your possession; but, as you have no horses, and the mud is too deep for women folks to walk, you can't tell him; so the next you hear of your 'pet' he will be either dead or our prisoner.' After the man left the ladies wondered what they could do in that emergency. At last Miss Laura concluded to go across the fields and leave word

with the Southern families to watch for Mosby and put him on his guard. While she was at Mr. George Coleman's in execution of this purpose, she beheld from the window a small body of men, and, in company with a lady friend, proceeded to intercept them. But as she approached she saw among them so many blue-coats that she feared she had fallen in with a band of Yankees, but was soon relieved from her suspense by John Underwood, who rode up to inquire the news, and was soon followed by Mosby, whom she informed of the ambuscade prepared for him."

Mosby, in his book, writes: "In the spring of 1863 I was proceeding with a detachment to Fryingpan, when I got within a mile of it and stopped for a few minutes to make my disposition for attacking the picket guard. I observed two ladies walking rapidly towards me; one was Miss Laura Radcliffe, the other her sister. Their home was near Fryingpan, and they had gotten information of a plan to capture me. But for meeting them my life as a partisan would have closed that day. There was a cavalry post in sight of Fryingpan; and near there in the pines a large body of cavalry had been concealed. It was expected I would attack the pickets, then they would have made an end of me.

"A garrulous lieutenant had disclosed the plot to Miss Laura, never dreaming she would walk through the snow to get the news to me. This was not the only time I owed my escape to the tact of a Southern woman."

When Captain Chapman of Mosby's battalion with twenty men struck a wagon train and captured twelve men and nineteen horses, he was hotly pressed, but was saved by the wit of Miss Marshall, who stopped the pursuit by assuring the Federal commander that pursuit was hopeless, as Chapman's men had scattered, each man for himself.

It was Mrs. Dawson who induced Mosby to close in on a sutler's train, in what was called at the time the "Calico Raid." The rangers arrayed themselves in the captured goods, as they passed along the road, decked in every imaginable article of fancy attire; all had women's hats on their heads. Mrs. Dawson was in her garden when they approached, and rushing to her house she exclaimed to her daughters: "Run, my children, to the garret, they are coming! They are coming! They aren't Yankees, and they aren't Rebs, they must be Indians! We will all be scalped. Run! Run!"

When Captain Chapman was on a scout he came upon the ruins of Dr. Sowers' house, and found Mrs. Sowers and her children sitting, despondent and hopeless, by the smoldering remains. The forlorn lady's wet eyes brightened when she beheld the partisans, and she urged them quickly to follow the inhuman wretches who had rendered her and her children homeless, and she said: "Smile and spare not, for though I have lost my home, I am still for the South. I love her more for the sacrifice I have made."

Captain Chapman said that the piteous spectacle and the woman's appeal maddened the partisans. As they galloped off they shouted, "No quarter! No quarter today!"

It may be well to state a fact which was known to both the Black Horse and Mosby's men, that it was rarely that a self-respecting native-born Northerner, with malice prepense, applied the torch. It was the foreigners and the riff-raff, or the hired substitutes and bounty jumpers, who joined the army for plunder who committed these outrages.

Frank Wilkeson, a brilliant Federal soldier of the Second Corps, Army of the Potomac, who wrote a clever book upon the war, says of the conscripts and bounty men who were sent to swell Grant's legions:

"These men had dropped out of their commands as they approached the battle line, and had hidden in the woods. There were hundreds of them in the army at Cold Harbor. There were hundreds of them around Petersburg. They sneaked away from their regiments during battle, or while marching to battle, to rejoin them when on the march. They were always present when rations were issued. They were never present when cartridges were supplied. They were, without exception, thieves. They robbed the dead. They stole from the living. They were strongly suspected of killing wounded men at night. More cowardly creatures were never clad in the uniform of English-speaking

peoples. They plundered houses. They frightened women and little children. They burned dwellings."

There was not a ranger of Mosby's battalion, or a Black Horse man, who had not tipped a glass in honor of Miss Jennie Chew, "The Rose of the Valley," as she was called. She was a lovely, fascinating and ac-



"THE ROSE OF THE VALLEY."

complished girl, and had more ardent suitors than any woman in Virginia. Like the brilliant Parisian, Marie Touchet, her motto was "*Je charme tout.*" All fell beneath the spell of her witching beauty and magnetism—the soldiers in blue as well as those who wore the gray.

She sent General Early more valuable information than all of his picked scouts together. The Rangers adored her, and many risked their lives in visiting her, her house being within the enemy's lines. She never married during the Civil War. It was a common saying among the soldiers that "The Rose of the Valley" had not the heart to marry, for by such act she would make one man happy, but scores of others miserable. She pointed the way to the partisans for Mosby to make a rattling dash on the Union wagon-train and sutler's stores. There was not a movement of Sheridan's in the Valley which did not come to her knowledge, and the information was promptly sent to Gen. Jubal Early by the "grapevine telegraph."

There was another woman whose name should be added to the roll of Virginia's heroines, and that is Miss Betty Martin, who lived within a few miles of Warrenton.

During the winter of '63 there had been a good many captures made by rebel scouts in the vicinity of Warrenton Junction, and the Union General Kilpatrick determined to put an end to it. For that purpose he sent out many scouting parties on a fixed night to surround all the neighboring houses and search them for the rebels. As the Martin house was a rendezvous of the Black Horse, a whole company was detailed instead of a squad.

It happened that Sergeant Martin and Mort Weaver were staying at the Martin house that night. About



ROBERT MARTIN.

By an English Nobleman presented with
rifle as the bravest man in the
Confederate Army.

one o'clock in the morning they were awakened by Miss Betty Martin, Bob's sister, a young girl in her teens, who was keeping watch.

"The Yankees are surrounding the house," she said.

Bob Martin had sworn that he would never be taken alive, and he whispered to his sister to hold them back as long as she could. She opened the door, and a Federal officer with pistol cocked tried to brush by her; she met him breast to breast and declared he should not enter. The officer parleyed, but she was undaunted. Finally one of the party, infuriated, fired point blank at her, but the bullet missed her head by an inch and buried itself in the door. Hearing the report of the weapon, the Federals rushed to the front of the house, and taking advantage of this Martin leaped from the window; and with a revolver in either hand he mingled with the Blue-coats and thus slipped away. But Mort Weaver was of different clay; the risk was too great for him. After the Federals had obtained lights they searched the house, and when they found Mort he quietly surrendered.

Miss Betty married a gallant Black Horse Cavalryman, William Bowen, and since the war has lived a calm, tranquil and happy life at her home near Casinova, Virginia.

CHAPTER VIII.

NEITHER DEATH NOR DANGER APPALLS.

No woman is aware of her own capabilities until she is tested, and there are some who will meet an emergency on the spur of the moment and bravely face the ordeal who did not dream they possessed such resolute powers.

There was a young cavalryman (a cousin of mine named Waller), a youth in his teens, who was visiting his fiancée, a tall, stately girl but a year younger than himself. She was a girl of gentle, winning manners, refined and lovely in mind as she was in person. She was the last one either family or friends would have selected to play the role of heroine or to face a crisis successfully. This was one of the instances where the two extremes met. She was above the medium height; he was below it, and measured only five feet three with his boots off. She was timid; he was the incarnation of recklessness. She was slow and stately in her movements; he was lithe and quick as a wildcat. Even among the plucky cavalymen Waller was noted for being the rashest of them all; he loved danger for danger's sake. On one occasion, out of pure bravado, he

dashed through a Federal cavalry camp, in broad daylight and in full uniform, and before they could recover from their surprise he was out and away.

Another time he was concealed in a forest as a Federal detachment of cavalry was passing, and just as the rear guard reached the point where Waller was hiding, spurring his horse, the latter with a mighty bound landed right behind them, discharged every barrel of his six-shooter amongst them, and dashed into the woods before the astonished men could fire upon him.

On the occasion when his life was saved by his fiancee he was on his way to pay her a visit. With his usual rashness he rode along the road as carelessly as if he were in the midst of Lee's army instead of a side road in Mosby's Confederacy, where, at the time, the strains of the bugles of the Blue-coats were echoing from crag to crag of the Blue Ridge. He was riding in the open road close to his destination, when a company of Federal cavalry closed in on him. Waller, though taken by surprise, did not lose his nerve; he turned and shot the captain and then sped straight down the road, with the crack of the pistols of his pursuers sounding loud above the thunder of the beat of the hoof strokes. A high rail fence ran along the highway, and there was nothing for him to do but keep straight on. As he neared the mansion he saw that the gate was closed, but he was well mounted and a light weight. With a bound his steed barely cleared it. But the horse lost his balance and fell to his knees. In an

instant Waller was off and ran up the steps into the house.

His sweetheart had seen the whole affair. The Federals had to stop to open the gate, and this gave him time to reach her side before the Federals reached the house. An ordinary woman would have screamed; an extraordinary woman would have turned white to the lips, and would have thrown herself before his bearded foes and thus have given him a chance to fly; but a heroine did neither. She heard the order to the troopers to surround the house, and, worse than all, she heard the clanking of spurred feet hurrying along the gravel walk. There was no time for tears, no time to think, only time to act on an inspiration that saved a human life. To do so was violating every principle of female modesty, every precept of the world, and doing violence to every finer feeling and performing an act which would in the common course of events cause her long and continued shame and regret. She loved her country; she loved its defenders; but most of all she loved the man now being hunted to death. She stood in the passage, her tall form rendered more imposing by the monstrous crinoline skirt, so much worn during the first two years of the war. Perforce, there may be some few people with unimpaired memory, who can recall the hoop-skirt so fashionable in that day. The lower hoop measured at least six feet in diameter, while the circumference could only be guessed at. The hoops were made of steel bands, and when the woman stepped



She made her lover stoop down and she
stood over him.

into it she was like the center pole of a tent. The humorists of those times made those hoop-skirts the subject of their diatribes; the pulpit thundered against them; the men rose in revolt (as well they might), but the women continued to wear them just the same. It was the fashion—and the tale is told.

A splendid figure the stately maid presented, with her regal head lifted high, and the contour of her form hid in her voluminous drapery. She made her lover stoop down, and she stood over him, her broad skirts effectually concealing his diminutive figure. As the Blue-coats came streaming into the hall, an officer in front, with his cocked Colt's in his hand, demanded to know where the Rebel was. She motioned them to a rear door, and she stood like a statue all the time they were searching the house. When interrogated by the officer, she answered coolly, calmly and plainly, as if she were discussing a dinner; and her magnificent nerve kept her standing there so naturally that not one of those men had the slightest suspicion that she knew anything of the Rebel fugitive.

After her sublime act it would seem that Fate would have watched over and have protected her lover; but her heart was broken when a year later tidings came to her that he had fallen with a bullet through his heart, his face to the foe.

In his book, "Mosby's Rangers," Williamson tells how the gallant Waller met his death.

"John H. Waller of Company A and Harry T. Sin-

nott of Company B were surprised in the house of Mr. Fishback, living near the Plains Station. They ran out the back way and Sinnott jumped the fence and escaped, but Waller faced about. The troopers of the detachment of the Eighth Illinois Cavalry reined up in front of him and demanded his surrender. He fronted the crowd—one against fifty—and his reply was the crack of his revolver; the fire was returned by a volley, and he fell dead.”

The Federal officer commanding the squadron told Mr. Fishback that Waller was the bravest man he ever saw. In the days of old, no higher tribute of a foeman could be asked, no greater eulogium could knight desire.

Again in the winter of 1864 occurred an incident which proves the truth of this couplet:

“What will not gentle woman dare
When strong affection stirs her up?”

Shakespeare has made Cordelia the paragon of daughters, but it is doubtful if she would have ventured and dared for good King Lear what plain Mary Pilcher did for her father.

It was a bitter, tempestuous night, with the rain falling spasmodically in torrents, and black as Erebus. Mary's father was an aged man of seventy, and they lived inside Mosby's Confederacy, about three miles from the railroad, which was heavily garrisoned by

Federal camps. The Pilcher family consisted of the father, mother and three girls, Mary, the eldest, being but eighteen, and the other two six and four respectively.

Old Mr. Pilcher was a martyr to neuralgia, and on the night in question was taken with a severe attack which slowly moved toward his heart. His agony was terrible, and there were no medicines in the house except some simple lotions. Mrs. Pilcher did all in her power; but her feeble efforts availed nothing, and she told her daughter that death was certain unless a doctor could be brought to his relief. Then it was that Mary formed a heroic resolution, and, going to her room, she put on her heaviest clothes and told her mother that she was going to the Yankee camp for a surgeon. Her mother, distraught by the dreadful suffering of her husband, made no protest; so in the face of the storm Mary started on her perilous journey. She had to literally feel her way foot by foot. In a short while she was drenched to the skin. As she neared the camp her courage almost failed. She knew that at any moment she might unconsciously come upon a sentinel, who would shoot her down without waiting for any explanation; and this nearly happened, for as she moved cautiously along the sudden sharp challenge of a sentry but a few feet distant was followed by the click of his gunlock. She gave a scream, and the woman's voice saved her life. The momentary lifting of the darkness showed her form dimly outlined against

the sky. The guard kept her covered with his musket and called for the corporal of the guard. When he came with a squad at his heels the girl demanded that she be taken to the colonel.

What a meeting! The tent dimly lighted, the officer half-dressed and only half-awake as he listened to the tale of the maiden, who was wan and white, as if she had been fished out from the bottom of the river! That Federal officer had a heart of gold; he treated her as if she were his own sister. He roused his staff, an ambulance was soon ready, and the regimental surgeon, as fine a gentleman as the earth could produce, accompanied her, and was the means of saving her father's life. He called several times, carrying food and medicine; but never after that first visit, with an armed escort, for he knew his Southern foe, and he knew that when on missions of mercy he was as safe in the dense thickets or on the open plains of Mosby's Confederacy, with the Rangers lurking in every covert, as he would be on Broadway.

CHAPTER IX.

THE JESSIE SCOUTS.

There was not a home within Mosby's Confederacy where the name of the Jessie Scouts was not spoken with bated breath. They came and vanished; there was a mystery about them that could not be fathomed; the crying children were threatened into silence by them, as were the bairns of the Scottish Lowlands hushed by their mothers telling them that Black Douglas would catch them. They were an organized Union band from the frontier—scouts, or rather spies, picked men, cool, fearless and utterly merciless. They dressed up in the Confederate uniform, and operated inside our lines; their chief aim was to kill dispatch-bearers, and send the papers to the Federal headquarters; also do all the harm they could to the Rebels. They were not regularly enlisted men, and examination at the War Department shows that they were not borne on the rolls of the army, but Mr. Staunton, Secretary of War, had a vast Secret Service fund at his disposal, and they must have been highly paid, for the risks they ran were so great that no ordinary men would undergo them for either love or money.

This outlaw organization was named for Jessie Fre-

mont, the brilliant wife of General Fremont, who commanded a detachment of U. S. Dragoons on the frontier of the Far West in the fifties. Mrs. Fremont was of the dashing type of woman, a splendid horsewoman, a good shot, and often accompanied her husband on his campaigns against the Indians of the plains. She was the idol of the troops and the backwoodsmen, and a shining light in society in Washington in 1861 and 1862, when her husband commanded the army in the Valley until he went down in defeat and oblivion before Stonewall Jackson. The living survivors of Longstreet's Corps, who, in that never-to-be-forgotten forced march from Gordonsville to Thoroughfare Gap in August, 1862, to unite with Jackson, will remember the thrill which ran through them as they saw the body of a soldier clad in gray, swinging from the branch of a big oak by the roadside. His face was covered by a handkerchief, and the motionless figure swung and turned in the passing breeze. As we filed past, not a whisper was heard in the ranks. It was the first hanged man many of us had ever seen. After we had passed every soldier in the line was inquiring the cause. We were told by our officers that it was a Yankee spy who had been caught and tried by drumhead court martial. It was a gruesome, awful sight. The men of Longstreet's Corps were veterans, and so familiar with death that a prostrate, lifeless figure would receive only a passing glance and no word of comment, but the sight of a man suspended between heaven and earth

deeply moved those dust-covered, foot-sore soldiers. In the language of Holy Writ: "They looked, and they marveled greatly." It was the body of a Jessie Scout! To state that yonder figure, swaying on the oak tree, when animate came within an ace of destroying Lee's Army, would be received with an ironic smile or a cynical sneer, and the narrator accused of being a greater liar than Baron Munchhausen himself. The idea of a nameless man disputing the conquering legions of Lee seems not only improbable, but preposterous; and yet it is the very romance of history, and is a historical fact.

A word of explanation: After the battles around Richmond Lee sent Jackson northward to attack Pope. The initial battle of Cedar Mountain, in Culpeper, was fought, and the strategy of Lee was successful. The besieging army of McClellan on the James River was hastily recalled for the defense of Washington. Then Longstreet marched to unite with Jackson on the Rapahannock. Lee conceived a bold stroke, but it was against all the principles of military maxims: he cut his army in two and sent Stonewall Jackson by a detour of more than sixty miles to get between Pope and Washington. Like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, Pope found his communications cut off, his base of supplies in the air, and his commissariat in flames. Yes, there was a big blaze at Manassas that August day; trains of cars loaded with provisions, hundreds of wagons jammed with supplies for the army, depots crammed

with ordnance stores, corrals of beef-cattle, and better than all in Johnny Reb's eyes was the sutler town. Such a collection of tents, shanties and stores was never seen outside the frontier. These sutler-shops were filled with the delicacies of life, and it was a sight indeed to see the gaunt, hungry foot-cavalry of Jackson's knocking off the heads of the champagne bottles and eating canned fruits; they satisfied aching stomachs that had been void for many a long day. In Messinger's play of "A New Way to Pay Old Debts," Justice Greedy exclaims: "Guts, croak no more, for you shall be filled." And so it was with those famished gray-backs. Think of the thousands of starving Rebs, whose regular rations were hardtack and rancid pork, filling up on potted meat and champagne!

Pope faced his army right about, and hurried to crush Jackson's isolated command. If there ever was a time when minutes were precious, that was the time. Jackson found that the combined armies of McClellan and Pope were closing in on his front and on his right and left flanks. Then Jackson performed a piece of strategy unique in the annals of war: he split his corps in two parts, and planted A. P. Hill in the center of the enemy's line. Pope seeing this, consolidated his whole command and telegraphed to Halleck that "he would bag Jackson and his whole crowd." Jackson then made a forced march to the right, reached Centerville, and finding the left flank of the Union Army drawn in, ordered Hill to leave his campfires burning

and slip off in the night and join him at Grovetown. The next morning Pope, having made his dispositions, hurled his whole force at the Rebel Army in his rear, and found—nothing. This caused Pope to make a new plan of battle, and this proved of infinite value to Jackson's men, giving his broken-down soldiers six hours of sleep. At Grovetown, near Thoroughfare Gap, Jackson's Corps of 17,300 men awaited the onset of Pope's Army of 55,600 rank and file. The odds were hopeless. Jackson had only a limited supply of ammunition, and that gone, surrender was inevitable. Napoleon never prayed for Grouchy's advance guard as did Jackson for the sight of Longstreet's skirmish line. A high mountain separated him from his promised succor, with only one narrow gap where a thousand men could hold an army at bay. If this gap was seized by Pope, Jackson's doom was written.

In the meantime, Longstreet made the greatest forced march of his life to reach the gap and join his forces to Jackson's. The fate of the campaign hung upon a few hours—it might be minutes. Jackson, at bay at Grovetown, had successfully repulsed one great assault of Pope's, but he had fought to the limit and could do no more than lie in line of battle and struggle on until the last shell of the artillery and the last ball cartridge of the infantry had been expended.

Now, whether Pope had bargained with the Jessie Scouts to delay Longstreet's advance will never be known. There was some prominent soldier in the plot

who had thoroughly coached the spy, and the scheme, desperate as it seemed, missed success by the turning of a hair.

Colonel John Cussons of Glen Allen, Va., was, at that time, captain of the Confederate Scouts, and wrote down word for word that scene in the mighty war drama of which he was the witness. He vividly describes the occurrence in a little pamphlet. This is Cusson's narrative:

"This way! General Hood," said the guide, gracefully saluting and pointing northward as the head of Longstreet's column swung towards the east. The guide, well-mounted and wearing the uniform of a Confederate cavalryman, was at the forks of the road near the village of White Plains, in Fauquier County, Va.

The road which General Hood was taking leads to Thoroughfare Gap in Bull Run Mountain, and is the only practicable approach to the field of Manassas where Stonewall Jackson was then struggling with the army of General Pope.

Hood halted his column and closely questioned the guide, feeling certain that he was in error; and yet it would seem that the guide must be right; he was intelligent, confident, definite, certain of his instructions, and prompt and clear in his replies. He was a handsome young fellow, with bold, frank eyes and a pleasant voice, and the precision of his statements gave weight to his words. The situation was critical; no exigency of war could be more so; it was not merely the issue of

a battle, but the fate of a campaign which hung in the balance!

The time was 10 A. M., August 28, 1862.

"Did General Jackson give you these instructions?" asked General Hood.

"Yes, General."

"When?"

"About four hours ago; I left soon after sunrise."

"What route did you come?"

"North of the mountain, General, by way of Gum Springs; there is no other road."

"Do you know where Stuart is?"

"I saw most of his command this morning; he is pushing, with his main body, for Sudley, to cover Jackson's rear. The brigade has gone north to guard the trains on the Aldie road."

"Trains on the Aldie road!" exclaimed Hood; "what trains are you talking about?"

"Stonewall Jackson's trains, General; he is pushing them towards Aldie, where I supposed you would join him."

"I have heard nothing of all this," said the General.

"Then I'll tell you what it is, General Hood; those devilish Jessie Scouts are at it again—cutting off Stuart's couriers. Jackson has heard nothing from Longstreet since yesterday morning, and he's afraid you'll follow the old order and try to join him by Thoroughfare Gap."

"Where is Jackson?" asked General Hood.

"I left him a little south of Sudley Springs, on the high ground commanding the turnpike."

"What is he doing?"

"Shortening his lines, General. You see Porter turned our right at Grovetown last night, and McDowell took Thoroughfare Gap, and Pickett was sent to attack Buford's cavalry, who had seized the pass at Hopewell; at least that's what Stuart's scouts told me."

"You say Jackson's left is at Sudley Springs?"

"No, General Hood; I intended to say that his left was *near* Sudley Springs, about a half-mile south. Kearney and Hooker attacked there in column last night, doubling us up, and the enemy now holds both the road and the fords."

"But that would make Jackson's position untenable."

"Yes, General, that's the reason he's falling back. They say McClellan has abandoned the James, and now covers Washington, and that Burnside has arrived from the coast. Within twenty-four hours—the way they figure it—Pope will have over a hundred thousand men. When I left there at sunrise Jed Hotchkiss had all the pioneers out; he was cutting roads and clearing fords, and bridging Catharpin Run, for that's the only way out now."

"How did you learn all these things?" asked General Hood, and there was a note of severity in his voice.

"Absorbed them from the atmosphere, I suppose," answered the guide rather languidly.

"Who, and what are you?" demanded General Hood, who was perplexed and anxious, yet scarcely suspicious of treachery, the guide was so bland and free and unconstrained.

"I am Frank Lamar of Athens, Georgia, enrolled with the cavalry of Hampton's Legion, but now detailed on courier service at the headquarters of Stonewall Jackson."

"Where's your sabre?"

"I captured a handsome pistol from a Yankee officer at Port Republic, and have discarded my sabre."

"Let me see your pistol." It was a very fine silver-mounted Colt's revolver; one chamber was empty.

"When did you fire that shot?"

"Yesterday morning, General Hood; I shot a turkey-buzzard sitting on the fence."

General Hood handed the pistol to Captain Cussons, commander of scouts. Cussons scrutinized the pistol, and the guide scrutinized Captain Cussons. As the Captain drew General Hood's attention to the fact that the powder was still moist, showing that the pistol had been recently fired, the guide interposed, saying that he had reloaded after yesterday's practice, and had fired the shot in question at another buzzard just before the column came in sight, but that he didn't suppose General Hood would be interested in such a matter.

The guide was mistaken. General Hood was decidedly interested in the matter! Guides do not practice marksmanship when on duty between the lines.

"Search that man!" exclaimed General Hood, impatiently; for the General was baffled and still uncertain. All his life had been passed in active service, yet this was a new experience to him.

The search revealed strange things. In the guide's haversack were little packages of prepared coffee and blocks of condensed soup and good store of hardtack, which facts the guide pleasantly dismissed with the remark: "It's a poor sort of Reb that can't forage on the enemy."

The next discovery had a deeper meaning. In the lining of his vest were found the insignia of a Confederate captain, the three gold bars being secured to a base which had a thin strip of flexible steel running lengthwise through it and slightly projecting at the ends. Further search revealed minute openings in the collar of his jacket, and into those openings the device was readily slipped and firmly held.

"What is the meaning of that?" asked General Hood, sternly.

There was an air of boyish diffidence and a touch of reproach in the young man's reply. Its demure humor was half playful, yet modest and natural, and its effect on the spectators was mainly ingratiating.

"Really, General Hood," he said, "you ask me such embarrassing questions. But I will tell you. It was just this way. Our girls, God bless them, are as devoted and patriotic as can be, but you couldn't imagine the difference they make between a commissioned officer and a private soldier."

Communicative as the guide was, the General could not read him. He might be an honest youth whose callow loquacity sprung from no worse a source than that of inexperience and undisciplined zeal, or he might be one of the most daring spies that ever hid supernal subtlety beneath the mask of guileless.

Meanwhile the precious moments were slipping by!—the fateful moments; moments on which hung the tide of war; the fortunes of a great campaign; the doom perhaps of a new-born nation.

And there at the parting of the ways sat our boyish guide—frank, communicative, well-informed—leaning on the pommel of his saddle with the negligent grace of youth and replying with perfect good humor to all our questioning.

We had every reason to believe that Stonewall Jackson at that moment was beset by overwhelming numbers, and nothing seemed to us more likely than that the enemy would attempt to cut off our approach by the seizure of Thoroughfare Gap. If Jackson's left flank was really at Sudley Springs, and his right at Grovetown, his right would be "in the air," and a movement to turn it would virtually support an occupancy of the mountain passes. This would naturally drive Jackson northward, toward Aldie, as our guide had stated.

The whole situation was perilous in the extreme, and our doubts were agonizing. If the Federals occupied the pass at Thoroughfare they could easily hold it against our assault, and if Jackson should attempt to join us there, they could destroy him. On the other

hand, if Jackson had really retreated toward Aldie we must at once change our course and join him by a forced march northward, and to do that would be not merely to abandon the campaign as planned, but also to relinquish to the enemy the short line and the open way to Richmond!

From his first moment of misgiving General Hood had taken measures to verify or discredit the guide's story. Swift reconnaissance was made in each direction, but the roads were ambushed by Jessie Scouts and infested with detachments of Buford's cavalry. Priceless moments were thus lost, and although we felt that Stonewall must be sore beset, yet we could not guess which road would take us to his battle or lead us away from it!

Meanwhile diligent questioning went on by staff officers and couriers, the benefit of every doubt being freely accorded, for many of us believed, almost to the last, that the guide was a true man.

When General Hood first halted his column a number of troops had strayed into the fields and woods to pick berries, and it was afterwards remembered that the guide's attention seemed to follow the soldiers, especially such of them as wandered toward a certain thicket near the edge of the forest. We were soon to learn the meaning of this, for in that thicket a frightful secret was hidden—a secret which, if discovered, would doom that guide to a shameful death—a death of infamy—of nameless horror, his sepulchre the gibbet,

his unburied flesh a loathsome meal for those evil birds which banquet on the dead. Was there some pre-vision of this in that swift glance which he cast toward the open country as he half turned in his saddle and took a firmer grasp on the reins? There were those among us who thought so afterwards. Yet he must have known that escape by flight was impossible.

In a moment, however, the startled gesture was gone, and there was again about him that same air of negligent repose, that same tranquillity of spirit which



was enhanced rather than impaired by the amused and half scornful smile with which he regarded the scrutiny of those around him.

While we thus observed him, there was a sudden commotion among the troops. Soldiers with grave faces, and some with flashing eyes, were hurrying from the eastward road. They had found a dying man, a Confederate dispatch-bearer, who had been dragged into the bushes and evidently left for dead. He had

gasped out a few broken words, managing to say that his dispatches had been taken—torn from his breast pocket; and that he had been “shot by one of our own men!”

The situation now was plain enough! That pretended Southern guide was in reality a Northern spy! He had taken his life in his hand and boldly flung it into the scale of war. The chances against him were infinite, yet so superb was his courage, so sedate his daring, that but for those unconsidered mishaps he would have won his perilous way; he would have blasted, at its fruition, the matchless strategy of Lee; he would smilingly have beckoned that magnificent army to its doom! Never, perhaps, in all the tide of time did consequences so vast pivot upon incidents so trivial. Had General Hood followed the spy and turned to the left, a certain trend of events would have been inevitable. Stonewall's beleaguered detachment would have perished; Longstreet's corps would have lost its base; Richmond would have fallen; John Pope would have been the nation's hero; the seat of war would have drifted toward the Gulf States, and the great tides of American history would have flowed along other courses.

General Hood drew his brigadiers aside. The guide, or rather the spy, glanced toward them, but remained unshaken; there was a certain placid fortitude in his manner which seemed incompatible with ruthless deeds; there was something of devotion in it, and self-sacrifice,

relieved, indeed, by just a touch of bravado, but without a trace of fear. None knew better than he that that group of stern-faced men was a drumhead court, and none knew better what the award of that court would be; he had played boldly for a mighty stake. He had lost, and was ready for the penalty!

There was a strip of forest where the roads forked, and among the trees was a large post oak with spreading branches. General Hood pointed to the tree, saying, that any of its limbs would do. A Texas soldier remarked that there was no better scaffold than the back of a horse, and the spy, approving the suggestion, sprang lightly up and stood on the saddle. Half a dozen men were soon busy in the tree, fastening a bridle-rein at one end and adjusting a loop at the other. As they slipped the noose over his head the spy raised his hand impressively:

“Stop!” he exclaimed, “I have three words more for you. I am neither Frank Lamar of Georgia, nor Harry Brooks of Virginia. I am Jack Sterry of the Jessie Scouts. I did not kill that rebel, but I was with those that did. His dispatches by this time are safe enough! I should like my comrades to know that I palavered with your army for a good half-hour, while General Pope was battering down your precious old Stonewall. Now, men, I am ready!—and in parting I will simply ask you to say, if you ever should speak of this, that Jack Sterry, when the Rebels got him, died as a Jessie Scout should!”

He folded his arms, and his horse was led from beneath his feet. General Hood turned aside, and, in subdued voice, gave the order of march, and the column moved on.

The writhing figure swung for a little while in the soft morning air, and was still, and there had gone forth to the God who gave it as dauntless a spirit as ever throbbed in mortal clay.

The distinguished and widely known Confederate surgeon, Dr. B. F. Ward of Winona, Miss., writes in a Jackson (Miss.) paper that he had read Cussons' account of the hanging of the spy, and said:

"I know it to be literally true, because I was present and witnessed the execution of Jack Sterry, who had baffled General Hood, and told him that the Federal General McDowell had possession of Thoroughfare Gap, and General Stonewall Jackson had sent him to join him at Gum Spring by taking the left-hand road, but Hood was too old a soldier to be caught."

Doctor Ward was captured and made friends with a Federal surgeon, and further says: "Through his intercession I was given the liberty of the city without any restraint except my promise to return to headquarters at night. This explains why I was walking about the city without a guard. One day I was strolling aimlessly along Broadway, cautious not to get off very far for fear I might be lost, when a man stepped in front of me, bowed gracefully, and said 'Good morning!' He was at least six feet in stature and would have

weighed 180 pounds; he was very erect, with square shoulders, and the carriage of a trained soldier. He was elegantly dressed, his hair black, his eyes large, dark and penetrating, while a heavy black moustache drooped gracefully around the corners of his mouth. His lower jaw was rather broad and firmly set, and as he showed his white teeth and smiled at me, he seemed to say, 'Now I have you.' I was uncomfortable; he saw it, and was evidently amused. He said, 'I think I know you.' I replied, 'No, sir; you do not, and I certainly do not know you.' He said, 'Yes, I met you once.' I asked where? He said, 'Two years ago I took dinner with you in Strasburg, at the house of a widow lady, Mrs. Eberle; you had three friends with you. While you were at dinner two cavalrymen came in and took seats at the table. I sat directly in front of you on the opposite side of the table, and my companion sat next to you on your right. You asked me what cavalry we belonged to, and I told you Ashby's command. You then asked me a number of questions about Ashby, where he was, the size of his command, etc.' Then looking me straight in the eyes, he said in a low, measured, somewhat incisive tone, 'My friend who sat on your right was hung by your people.' The announcement went through me like a dagger of ice. I not only remembered the two cavalrymen, in their bright, new unsoiled uniforms, and the conversation, but I vividly recalled the features of the man who stood before me, and I realized with a shiver that the handsome young

fellow who sat by my side at dinner was none other than the dashing and fearless Jack Sterry, whom I had seen hanged at White Plains."

Scout Cussons continues his narrative. He says:

"On August 31, 1862, I fell into the hands of the enemy at Bull Run, and while my captors rested at a spring by the roadside a squadron of Federal cavalry rode up. They were as gay-looking a lot of dare-devils as I ever beheld, but what struck me even more than the dashing recklessness of the troopers was the splendid quality of the horses they rode; many of the animals appeared to be thoroughbred; all were superb. There were perhaps a score of these troopers, and as they drew rein around the spring their bugler sounded 'Peas on trencher,' and in an instant—as by a stroke of magic—their whole appearance changed! the troop of Union cavalry had vanished, and there in its place was as jolly a group of rebels as ever sang 'Jine the Cavalry' for the delectation of that prince of cavaliers, the gallant and mirth-loving Jeb Stuart. This sudden and complete transformation was achieved by their simply flinging off their butternut-lined blue overcoats and disclosing the rebel gray beneath. All other clothing was practically common to the troopers of either side. Both Federal and Confederate horsemen wore a service-stained sombrero, and each had his dusty trousers stuck in his still dustier boots, so that by merely pulling on or throwing off his blue overcoat he could in an instant be either a Northern or Southern soldier.

“Their organization had rather the freedom of a hunting party than the disciplined regularity of war, so that it was not easy to mark their leader. But one of them, apparently in command, presently threw himself on the wet grass and asked in a free yet courteous way what rank I held in Secessia, for I was in scouting dress. This led to an exchange of badinage which provoked plenty of laughter and a fair share of soldierly good feeling. Then came a pause, and looking steadily into my eyes he distinctly called me by my Indian name. Yet why did I not know him? That seemed so strange. He was familiar with Albert Sydney Johnson’s Utah march in 1857, yet he had never met the general and knew no member of his staff. He recounted Summers’ exploit with the Sioux at Ash Hollow, yet did not know Rubadeau or Big Phil or Louis Provo. He recounted particulars of the killing of Mat-tpne Io-wa on North Platte, and the swift vengeance of the Dakotahs; yet he knew no member of the Laramie garrison. He was quite familiar with life on the plains during the fifties, and though I probably knew and was known by every hunter and trapper and ranchman between the Sweet-water and Fort Bridges, yet I could in no way identify this mysterious plainsman. Finally the conviction settled in my mind that he had belonged to the robber band of Vasquez—a crew of bandits and cattle thieves whose caches extended from the Wild River Mountains to New Mexico, and who were known only by the dark trail of their remorseless deeds. For years that

little band of robbers—some thirty in number—had been pursued with unrelenting zeal by the army of the United States, but it was like a combat between a prize ox and a gadfly. The robbers had their supplies secreted at short intervals throughout a vast and unpeopled region, and the Government troops could neither surround, nor starve, nor snow-blockade, nor trail them. The little band could cover a hundred miles without making a fire or leaving a sign; they could scatter in pairs and assemble at will wherever they would. The birds of the air were not more free.

“And the horsemanship of those Jessie Scouts was so noticeable. Most of them wore the Mexican spur and carried a buckskin lariat. Their seat was snug with the knee grip of the buffalo hunter, and many of their saddles had the double girth and threaded cinch seen only on the plains. As a matter of fact these Jessie Scouts were not scouts at all, but spies—spies who wore our uniform, impersonated guides, and slew our dispatch bearers without mercy. And yet the daring fellows were not common criminals. They had standards of their own—an *esprit de corps* and point of honor which were absolute. They were immeasurably more dangerous than mere law-breakers, for they were adventurous and brave, and though doubtless they led evil lives, yet they could die well.”

I have given much space to the Jessie Scouts for the reason that they turned their attention to Mosby's Confederacy, and they would have been a deadly menace

to the partisans, for they could call to their aid any detachment of Bluecoats nearest them. Their design was to mix with the people as far as they could without detection, and find out when and where the partisans would strike, and then warn the Federals so that they would be ready for them. Then again, they would mark the houses where the scouts made their headquarters, and send the Bluecoats on a night-raid and gobble them up. Doubtless, they had high hopes of cleaning out Mosby's Confederacy, and their schemes might have worked had it not been for the women. The Jessies tried again and again to pose as Confederate cavalrymen at the different homes they visited, but in vain; no matter how perfect they were in details relating to Mosby's battalion, no matter how they accounted for their presence, they could not deceive the maids and matrons. One thing, their accent betrayed them; again, it was their make-up, and a certain indescribable difference that caused the women to stamp them as spies. Once the natives' suspicion was aroused they became as close as clams, and would refuse in most instances to give them anything to eat. As soon as the people learned of the Jessie Scouts, they became exceedingly circumspect, and they would far prefer to see a squad of Bluecoats ride up to the door than have a couple of spurious Graybacks enter the house. When two Confederate cavalrymen, unknown to each other, met, explanations and proof were required at pistol point, and to refuse to answer was to meet death.

Three times in one day, when going along the road from Orleans to Salem, I was halted by Mosby's men, and not knowing who they were I watched them with a cocked pistol in my hand, while they read my transfer to the Black Horse.

Williamson tells in his book of meeting a party of Jessie Scouts. He states:

"On the evening of the 13th, on the turnpike, we saw a detachment of cavalry dressed in gray. We viewed them with suspicion for some time, and finally Colonel Mosby ordered Lieutenant Grogan to take a few scouts and meet them. Discovering them to be Jessie Scouts Grogan called out: 'Come on boys, we will ride over them.' But the Jessies did not wait; they broke and ran, leaving one dead and one prisoner."

CHAPTER X.

AN ADVENTURE WITH THE JESSIE SCOUTS.



It was a dull, murky evening in November, damp and cold, and just such a time as one who had no important business to transact would keep indoors and make one's self comfortable.

In a little negro hut, set well back in the pines, were two men. One was Julien Robinson, and the other one of Ashby's men, named Clark, who was spending his furlough in Fauquier, and was stopping at Mrs. Baker's, his aunt, who lived about a mile away. The house was situated some distance from the public road and was deemed a safe retreat by the scouts. Mrs. Baker had three children, two well-grown daughters, and one son about twelve years old. Julien was also billeted at Mrs. Baker's. Mrs. Baker was an extremely nervous, timid woman, and begged Julien to remain away from the house as much as possible, so he complied with her request. Julien, Martin and the scout made their headquarters at the negro log cabin. Mrs. Baker did many things to make them com-

fortable; and, to an infantryman of Lee's army, it would have been a luxurious abode. The cabin was built of stout logs, had a wide fireplace, and there was plenty of wood and water within easy reach. Martin had gone on a visit to a neighboring farmhouse, and Robinson and Clark intended to start for the Baker's as soon as it was dark.

In the late evening there rode up to the Baker house four Confederate cavalymen. They were splendidly mounted, and having hitched their horses to the paling they advanced to the porch, where they were met by Mrs. Baker and the girls, who gave them a warm greeting and invited them in.

They were soon seated in the parlor, the girls left to entertain them while Mrs. Baker, on hospitable thoughts intent, went into the kitchen to prepare supper. The girls, Miss Judith and Irene Baker, were much impressed with the appearance of their visitors; they were near the same age, about five and twenty years, the girls judged; their uniforms were new and well-made, and they all wore top boots, and each carried two Colts. When asked by one of the girls what command they belonged to, they told their tale. They were all from Maryland, near Hagerstown, and being ardent Southerners had decided to join Mosby. When asked if it was not rather late in the war to volunteer, each explained his reasons, and good one they were, too. One was married to a girl from Pennsylvania, and his wife was intensely loyal, and in deference to her wishes

he had kept out of the fight; but she died, a year ago—and here he was. Another's family was strongly secession (as he put it), and his Union neighbors, by false evidence to the Federal commandant at Hagerstown, induced him to order his father's house searched. This indignity was more than he could stand, so he determined to cast in his lot with the South. The other had no grievance, but went because his three friends did. Then they told how they had gone to Baltimore, had their uniforms made to order, secured their arms, and crossed the Potomac near Monocacy Bridge.

The two girls sized them up, and came to the conclusion that those sinewy, whalebone figures had never followed the plow; they all had the cut of resolute, cool-headed, clear-gritted men, the very last to calmly plant corn and hoe potatoes when fighting was going on all around them; they looked to be typical dare-devils, every one of them, and it was impossible for those keenly observant girls, after hearing them talk, not to be convinced that they were not Southerners. Their quick, incisive language, their gestures, their mode of expression, were utterly foreign to all their preconceived ideas of a Confederate soldier. But these maids, with true feminine tact, kept their thoughts to themselves, and their visitors never for a moment imagined that they had been "judged and found wanting" by a couple of unsophisticated country girls.

Miss Juliet excused herself, saying she must go and help her mother; instead, she went to the study and

wrote a note to Julien, advising him to get as many men as he could and steal into the house and give a tap on the door; she would throw it open, and they could catch them unprepared.

She gave the note to her brother to deliver to Robinson at once.

The supper passed off quietly. There was not much to eat, but the visitors were blessed with good appetites. After the meal was finished they adjourned to the parlor, where again the girls entertained them. The men asked their advice as to where they could find Mosby in the morning; where the partisans generally stayed, and a whole torrent of questions concerning their life, and, especially, where was their rendezvous when they started on their raids. The girls answered shyly, diffidently and ignorantly, and the *ci-devant* Grayjackets evidently thought that they, at least, had found guileless girls, whose whole existence was wrapped up in their humble home. They were soon to be undeceived. Robinson received Miss Juliet's note and scribbled on it: "Keep them as long as you can, and when you hear a tap on the parlor door throw it wide open," and sent it back to her. He then examined his pistols carefully, saw that the cylinders revolved easily and that the caps were fresh, then mounting his horse he rode like the wind to reach Martin in time. By good luck they met on the way to the Bakers, and Julien explained the situation to his friend, who was willing and eager to follow him.

It was dark when they drew up at Mrs. Baker's, and they could just make out the four horses tied to the fence. They led their own horses to a piece of pine woods a few hundred yards from the house, and on their return Robinson gave his friend instructions. They were very simple: "Do exactly as I do; draw your revolvers and follow me, and remember to keep on my side." Then they cautiously entered the house, tip-toed along the passage, and Julien tapped lightly on the parlor door.

Inside the four cavalrymen were sitting at their ease. Miss Juliet had been singing, and they were complimenting her, when the listening ears caught the sound. Without a moment's hesitation she rose, went to the door and threw it wide. In a second there was an impressive tableau. The four men jumped to their feet, and they looked straight into the barrels of the Colts and heard a clear, ringing voice say: "Surrender!"

There was nothing of *gaucherie* among those men; they realized instantly that their assailants had the drop on them, and they calmly and quietly unbuckled their arms, which Julien motioned to Clark to collect and carry to a safe place. In the meantime the girls had fled from the room.

The four cavalrymen had not turned a hair; but as they all sank back in their seats one said that he thought it was rather a singular way to treat recruits of the Confederate Army. Robinson replied that in Mosby's Confederacy every man must not only show his colors,

but prove them; that he was only acting under orders. The men declared that they had come in good faith to join Mosby and were willing to start that moment for his headquarters. Julien assured them that they should see the partisan chief the next morning. One of the cavalrymen asked what he proposed to do with them? Robinson answered that they would be held under guard until the morning.

They started off on foot for the cabin, Martin leading the way with a lighted lantern, and Robinson bringing up the rear. Reaching the hut, they entered; it contained only one room, with an old bedstead in one corner, a few loose boards laid on the scantling above formed the attic, which was reached by a ladder. Had the two Confederates realized the desperate character of the men they had to deal with they would have placed them in this attic, withdrawn the ladder, and kept a strict watch. But the bonhommie of the four men was such that they quite captivated their guards, who were profuse in their apologies for being compelled by official orders to guard strictly until they could identify themselves.

Leaving Martin as sentry, Robinson went to the Bakers' house, gathered in the horses and returned. He then took his own and his comrade's horses and tethered them in the depths of the pines, then tied the four horses of the unknown to trees close to the cabin. The six men smoked an amicable pipe before turning in. Robinson made a shake-down in one corner of the

cabin for the prisoners. A lighted candle was on an old table, and there was one chair; this was taken by the guard, Robinson seating himself, with a revolver lying loose in its holster, while Martin lay on the bed to get his two hours' sleep.

It was about three or four o'clock in the morning when the four prostrate figures rose and found both their guards sound asleep. It is almost impossible for a healthy man to sit in a chair for two hours and keep keenly alert and watchful; the drowsy god soothes the senses, blurs the thoughts, deadens the will, and, forgetting duty—forgetting danger—he journeys by imperceptible stages into dreamland. The prisoners had them wholly at their mercy, but they had no wrongs to redress, no bitter grievance to cause them to shoot a sleeping man. Instead, they had been treated with kindness and consideration. It is, of course, impossible to know their thoughts and their plans, but their actions spoke plainly. They were no murdering assassins; they simply desired to get away quietly; and this they did. Not until after daybreak did the guards discover that their prisoners had taken French leave. They slipped the halters on their horses, mounted and disappeared, leaving nothing for their Rebel acquaintances to remember them by but their pistols. It is needless to say that neither Robinson nor his friend ever boasted of their adventure; they never alluded to it. A man, especially a soldier, hates ridicule, and would rather charge a six-gun battery than be laughed at.

The escape of the Jessie Scouts was not a very daring adventure, but it proved to them that they might deceive the men, but they could not delude the women of the Debatable Land into thinking that every gray-jacket covered a genuine Reb; neither was Mrs. Baker's house ever visited again by any of the Jessie Scouts.

CHAPTER XI.

WARRENTON.

Passengers traveling southward on the S. A. L. R. R., when about forty miles from Washington, will hear the brakesman sing out: "Calverton. Change cars for Warrenton." If he is a tourist or visitor he will get out and be politely helped up the steps by Jack Colvin, who has been conductor on this little one-track, one-horse railroad since the days which no man remembers. A fine specimen of a man is Jack, and he can tell a visitor more about the historic town than all other chroniclers put together. Six miles from the junction, nestling among hills and valleys, this little town lies; small as to population, numbering at the beginning of the war, according to the 13th census, only 604 white inhabitants; yet, with the exception of Richmond, this little hamlet wielded greater political power than any city of Virginia. This borough in *ante bellum* days gave to the country a Chief Justice of the United States, Senators, Congressmen and a governor. During the war it also developed a genius, little less than marvelous: his name was Billy Smith, a stocky, freckle-faced lad whose genial, open-hearted manner made

friends with everybody. He began his career as a mail-carrier, and was so adroit that one of his few enemies nicknamed him "Extra Billy." The sobriquet stuck to him for the remainder of his life, and proved to be the right name for the right man. He ran for office, and like all politicians made enemies all around, and "Extra Billy" was derided and ridiculed by his political opponents, but he won out. No one, not even his most intimate friends, divined the powerful mentality of the man; none suspected that the stiff-haired, shock-head contained a brain equal to that of any man's Virginia ever produced. When the war came on he volunteered, and again the unthinking mocked and jibed, the idea of the lucky politician, Extra Billy Smith, being a soldier! But after-events proved he was a born warrior. His magnificent handling of his regiment at Sharpsburg, in all probability, saved the day. Had he been summoned to command the Army of Northern Virginia he would, doubtless, have been equal to the tremendous responsibility. Called upon to be governor of Virginia at her most momentous period, he so navigated the good Ship of State among the rocks, shoals and quicksands as to silence even envy's hiss and folly's bray. He was, in the truest acceptation of the term, a great man. His service to the State and the Confederacy was so great that he alone of all the governors of the seceded States was singled out by Mr. Stanton, the Federal Secretary of War, as an object-lesson to make treason odious, for after Lee surrendered a reward of \$25,000

was offered "for the person of William Smith, late general, and Governor of Virginia, of the late so-called Confederacy, either dead or alive."

The grim old war horse did not run; he stood his ground and challenged an investigation. Of course, nothing came of it, and after real peace descended upon the land the Governor was wont to say that the highest compliment he ever received was the proclamation of Secretary Stanton. He lived a long life, surrounded by his family, endeared to and loved by a legion of friends. His mortal remains now rest in the cemetery at Warrenton. A fitting epitaph would be: "Oh, seek no further, for a greater can't be found."

Because of his simplicity and unaffectedness; because of his disrelish of pomp and parade and his love of the simple life; because of his power to make friends and his ability to lead men, ex-Governor Smith resembles Cincinnatus, the noble Roman, more than any man I ever met.

It is to be regretted that ink was so scarce within Mosby's Confederacy that most of the correspondence between soldiers and maidens was written with lead pencils. What a world of romance would have been saved! How many tales of daring have been lost through the fading of the pencil strokes! Yet if the truth must be told, the love letters were mostly confined to the sterner sex. The girls would write a column about war, and devote about one line to sentiment. Then, again, they never knew into whose hands their

letters might fall. The recipient might be captured, wounded or killed, and curious eyes might glance over their loving words. No! With the girls it was war! War! and the knife to the hilt. The latest news from the army was talked of, rumor speculated upon; the relative merits of every general in the army were discussed, and the next campaign was the absorbing theme. Many of the scouts carried a map of Virginia, and many a fair head was bent over the plan to win a great victory which some Napoleon or Johnny, in tatters and rags, had outlined. It was a curious study to see them receive some old newspaper that had passed through many hands before reaching theirs; for it goes without saying that there were no postoffice or postmasters within Mosby's Confederacy. A newspaper was a valued treasure in the isolated homes of that section, and its news items were eagerly devoured by the women; but they took no interest in the marriage notices, lists of bargain sales or society news. It was the war column and news from the front that absorbed their minds.

Warrenton was called the capital of Mosby's Confederacy, and every raiding party would deflect from its course and dash through its streets. To the Bluecoats it must have been like "Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain," tho' every door and window was tightly closed, and not a soul was visible. Yes, there was one exception: the worthy Mayor always met the visiting military with a bow and a smile, and offered

them the keys and the freedom of the town. This happened so often that "His Honor," like the popular country doctor, was often called up at the most untimely hours of the night.

On one occasion a Federal brigade of cavalry swept into town at noon most unexpectedly. It was a dull day in November, and a heavy fog dimmed everything, and it caught the villagers napping. A dozen or more old men were rounded up and taken before the general commanding. "What is your name?" he asked of one.

"My name is Rabbitt, sir."

"And yours?" addressing the next one.

"My name is Coon, sir."

"Yours?" he shouted at a little Dutchman.

"Lion, Your Honor," was the reply.

"Adjutant," roared the general, "lead all these men to their homes; we seem to have struck a damn menagerie."

Yet these men had given their correct names. It was a curious coincidence that they should all have been together.

Now a word about glorious old Warrenton, the capitol of Mosby's Confederacy. How many recollections that ancient burg invokes. Though numbering only a few hundred inhabitants, the place has known more of romance, comedy and tragedy than any other spot in America. There is not a house which was standing there in the sixties that has not a history. The mighty hosts, the Army of the Potomac and the

Army of Northern Virginia, have both repeatedly filed through its streets, and the thunder of the guns from each great battlefield could be heard there. The crack of the carbine, the whip-like note of the revolver, the thud of the flying hoof-beats as the rival scouts and cavalymen met, was of such frequent occurrence as to excite scarcely a remark. "Rude war's alarms" were so common that they occasioned only a thrill, and acted as a stimulant to many who had grown to love excitement.

Warrenton before the clash of arms was a rushing, thriving trade center. Huge wagons and vans came over the mountains from the rich counties of Orange, Culpeper, Rappahannock and Loudoun, loaded with wheat, corn and oats; the housewife sent her poultry and dried fruit; great herds of cattle wended their way to this town, for the astute merchants of Warrenton gained and held this enormous trade by making it the most profitable market for the planters and farmers. For its size Warrenton was the richest town, per capita, in the whole South. When the war broke out the traffic instantly ceased, and from a busy mart the town became, to use a business term, "stone dead." To be sure, the people remained, for there was no place for them to go, and if there had been they could not move their lares and penates, for there was absolutely no means of transportation—neither ox, ass nor horse. It was a situation that only a great Civil War could produce. The merchants and shopkeepers in the town had a dis-

mal time during the war. Those who remained at home were either old or elderly men; there was not a single young man in the place. The male inhabitants felt, like Othello, the Moor, "their occupation was gone." To the active, bustling business man, who had spent most of his life in the counting-room or office, free to buy and sell, free to go and come, this enforced inaction was a heavy cross to bear. To wander, day after day, aimlessly up and down, haunting, through habit, the location of their former activities, look upon the closed shops and stores, watch the long day spin out its length, and feeling that the spectre Poverty was everywhere dogging their steps, was all that remained to be done. The only spark of comfort was in knowing that all were in the same boat; their only satisfaction that they had a house over their heads. If misery loves company, there was enough, and to spare. So they swallowed their meager fare, and like so many "Micawbers" waited for something to turn up. They gnawed their hardtack, drank their decoction, miscalled coffee, and nightly prayed "give us this day our daily bread."

One of the greatest mysteries of today is why the well-to-do people of the South did not, like a garrison, when they learned that the enemy was approaching, provision the place for a siege. The men of the border heard the muttering of the tempest, they saw the storm-clouds darken the sky, they gazed upon the fitful flashing of the lightning, they listened to the distant rum-

bling of the thunder, they knew the storm was about to break, yet they hearkened not. Instead of collecting their debts, withdrawing their gold from the banks and reefing their sails for the coming tornado, they, like the careless mariner, sailed unconcernedly on until they were startled by the awful turmoil of the raging waters. The wheel of progress stopped, commerce stood still, banks closed, and ready money, even among the well-to-do, became insufficient and impossible to obtain either by note, bond or mortgage. The solution of this situation, this dense blindness, was that these hard-headed business men thought that the war would prove but an episode of a few months instead of an epoch of many years. So the war once on, the rich men of Warrenton were on a level with their poorer neighbors. Though possessed of many broad acres, they could jingle no more cash in their pockets than the street-sweeper. Never was such a bewildering anomaly seen outside the Debatable Land, for they lived between two armies, being, as it were, the witch on one side and the devil himself on the other.

It was the erstwhile rich who had the greater burden to carry. Learned and eloquent lawyers, gentlemen of the old school, sat in their cushioned chairs in office, waiting, not for clients, but simply from force of habit. "*Inter armes leges silent.*" Spiders spun their webs over Chitty and Blackstone. For a time law was defunct, the rubicund judge, "whose fat belly with good capon lined," the town clerk, the court crier, were now

but a memory. The only law of the land was might; and the sword was mightier than the pen. But the quintessence of silent suffering was to be found among the *bon vivants* and epicures; some of them now eat to live instead of live to eat. The formal dinner and the invitation to take "pot luck," which was an informal affair, was now but an iridescent pipe dream. No lon-



ger did the sybarites stretch their legs beneath the mahogany. The noble haunch of venison had given place to "sow belly;" the terrapin stew to pork hash. If ever men did mortify the flesh those Warrentonians did.

But worse remains to be told: think of the appalling situation of those who loved the red, red wine, who smacked their lips over the fragrant Otard or the mellow Old Hennessy; think of the royal mint juleps which transported men to Olympus; imagine if you can the pathos of those rotund wine-bibbers, compelled in their old age to climb into the water wagon. It was, in their opinion, the saddest event of the Civil War.

But to go back a little. Warrenton was at the very pinnacle of its glory in the summer and fall of 1861. The small battle of Bull Run had been fought and won. The Confederate Army was in camp at Centerville, in Fairfax County, about twenty miles away, and was the only town between Alexandria and Richmond, except indeed Fredericksburg, which was far out of the way on the Rappahannock River. Warrenton became the headquarters of the great army, in one sense at least. What was twenty miles when every house approached was to the soldier a home, where he could stay as long as he pleased. The town was thronged day and night. The enemy had been beaten back, and as the *Richmond Examiner* proclaimed, "lay cowering behind the shelter of their garrisoned forts at Washington." Both, the soldiers in gray and the people, believed this insane foolishness was true, and they fairly revelled in the fact that they were victors, and as such enjoyed each passing hour. The iron hoof of war had not yet stamped upon this fair land, and provisions were plentiful, the barns full; the rich Piedmont region was at

that time a land flowing with milk and honey. So Warrenton, always famous for its lovely women and unstinted hospitality, was the Mecca for every soldier who worshiped at the shrine of Venus and Bacchus. There may have been in the Army of Northern Virginia some Sir Galahad who could swear:

“My knees have bowed before crypt and shrine,
I never touched a maiden’s lips, or held maiden’s
hand in mine,”

but if so he was never seen in Warrenton, for courting and love-making were the chief diversion on week-days, and the devotional exercises on Sunday. Parties, balls and impromptu dancing were in full swing, for the soldier’s motto was: “Enjoy today, for tomorrow you may die.” And as there were thousands of soldiers who by blood, birth and education were the beau ideal of ardent lovers, in camp and close by this town thronged with maidens fair to see, it is safe to say there was “something stirring.” Not even a summer at the Greenbrier White Sulphur, or a winter in New Orleans, ever saw the like; it was a swirl and dash of gallantry; the very acme of a girl’s dreams, the summit of female felicity. Love, homage, fealty, worship from a single one is exciting, but when offered from a score or more, it becomes a hasheesh dream, as at Warrenton it lasted nearly a year.

“Oh! that was life!” remarked a matron to me some

years after, who had been one of the belles in that glorious time. "I averaged from forty to fifty callers a day, and held a veritable court, and was a veritable queen, and I received in one week as much devotion as a girl in ordinary circumstances receives in a lifetime. Poor fellows, they owed us, they thought, a huge debt for entertaining them, and bringing a light into their lives; and they paid us with all they had to give, their homage, their fancy, and their love."

Then a change came. In the spring of 1862 the Army of Northern Virginia was rushed to Richmond and thence to Yorktown to confront McClellan's great host. Then ensued the seven days' battle around Richmond, and the advance northward. The engagement of Cedar Run was fought in the middle of August, 1862, and Stonewall Jackson, in his peculiar way, won the battle, and uniting with Longstreet they pushed on, and on the historic field of Manassas met their old foes, the Army of the Potomac, under command of Major-General John Pope. A more unfortunate selection to command that magnificent legion could not have been made. However, no army could have won a victory under his leadership; so the bombastic Pope, who boasted that his headquarters was in the saddle (President Lincoln said he thought his hindquarters were there), was hurled headlong back into the defences of Washington.

This battle filled Warrenton to overflowing with the desperately wounded who could not endure the arduous

trip to Richmond. There was no regular hospital at Warrenton, and the wounded were crowded in the town without any preparation whatsoever. The Government trusted to the people, and they rose to the occasion. Every church, public building and house was filled, and it was then that the pleasure-loving, mirthful, light-hearted girls of '61 gave place to the sad, serious and devoted nurses of '62, and if there were ever more tender, gentle and efficient attendants, history has never proved it. Warrenton was but a vast hospital, and day and night these Warrenton women ministered to and watched over the maimed. There was blood everywhere; the very air reeked with it, and as the hot summer days dragged by the little town became a veritable charnel house. The wounded, most of them hopeless cases from the first, died off like flies. Amid these gruesome scenes of men torn by shot and shell, moaning in their pain, muttering in their delirium, or screaming in their agony, these gently-bred, refined girls, their hearts torn with anguish, their very souls sickened with horror, came and took their position by bedside and cot, staunching blood, dressing amputated limbs, washing suppurating wounds—all this terrible ordeal in this modern day, performed only by trained nurses and experts, was done by the women of Warrenton. All the pain they allayed and the number of lives they saved will never be known in this world. What a test of the heroic in woman! What a trial to heart and soul was that experience of wounds and sudden death; yet not

one flinched. The women of Warrenton made a splendid record in that bloody year of 1862. Six hundred graves bear mute but powerful evidence to the arrests made by "that fell sergeant, Death." Every battlefield in Grant's bloody march through the Wilderness sent its ghastly quota of torn, maimed and mutilated humanity to Warrenton. In the town graveyard over a thousand soldiers lie buried; but ten times that number were nursed back to health and strength by those heroines.

I recall to mind two lovely girls, Miss Janet and Meta Weaver, just entering womanhood; and Miss Lily Pollock, Mamie Mason, Fannie Horner, Sue Scott, Mrs. Richard Payne, Mrs. Dr. Ward, Mrs. McIlhany, Miss Mary Amelia Smith, Mrs. Brooks, Mrs. Shackelford, Mrs. Caldwell, and the Misses Lucas, whose lives for four long years were gemmed and jewelled by their charity and good deeds. How they deprived themselves of the very necessaries of life to feed the hungry and the sick; how they strived, schemed and worked to get food for themselves and their patients, can never be known. Of the tens of thousands of Confederate soldiers who passed through the town during the war, there was not one who appealed to the poverty-stricken community in vain. How they accomplished it will always appear to be one of the miracles. There were no markets wherein to buy or sell and no money, yet by hook or crook they clothed the naked and fed the hungry.

There was one woman in the town who dropped everything and devoted herself to the task, day and night, of nursing the wounded soldiers. Her name was Mrs. Johnsie Tongue. She was the Florence Nightingale of Mosby's Confederacy. Certainly if every good deed which she performed had been a block of granite, and had been placed over her last resting place, she would sleep beneath a column that would overtop the loftiest peak of the Blue Ridge. She was a saint to the wounded whom she tended, and an angel to those who held her hand as they entered into the "Valley and the Shadow." So long as the traditions of the old burg shall be handed down from father to son, from mother to daughter, will the name of that white-souled woman, Mrs. Tongue, be cherished and honored.

There were also many wounded Federal soldiers brought to Warrenton, and then it was that the charity and humanity of the women of Warrenton were subjected to the crucial test. The foe was at their doors, within their gates, but not with martial bearing, nor armed with pistol, sabre and musket. Instead it was a silent, pathetic throng, stretched on pallet, couch or cot, mutilated with shot or burned with fever. These Virginia women met the ordeal and came out triumphant. The maids and matrons, cool and defiant before their armed enemies, were changed into sympathetic nurses. They dropped the black garb of Ate and donned the robe of the Vestals. The grateful glance, the mur-

mured word of thanks of those stricken soldiers of the Union, were the highest tribute ever paid to Warrenton womanhood. Their metal was tempered and tested, and proven pure gold.

General Lee always spoke of Warrenton in the most affectionate and endearing terms; and to hear Jeb Stuart, the leader of the cavalry, expound on the subject one would truly think Warrenton was inhabited by angels. General Stuart was greatly indebted to the town of Warrenton, for to him it was a veritable "bureau of information," and gave him inside information of the enemy's plans and forces that his scouts were not able to obtain.

It was wonderful how quickly news of the movements of the enemy could be discovered and disseminated and spread abroad by means of the grapevine telegraph. There were some families, like the Arundels, who were appointed by General Jeb Stuart himself to collect information, and it is safe to say he picked out the loveliest, brainiest, most devoted and patriotic among all the fair women of the Confederacy. It was a solemn, sacred trust to them. These ladies received and entertained Federal officers at their homes, and were ostracized all during the war by the whole community, for their mission was kept a profound secret. These Circes invariably wormed out every military secret from their visitors, and by the time the Bluecoats were hurrying buoyantly to the bugle's blare of "boots



"These Circes invariably wormed out every military secret."



and saddles," there would be several Paul Reveres of every age and sex speeding throughout Mosby's Confederacy; and as a result of the information the flying Federal column might sweep through the country without seeing a living thing, and return to report that the country was quiet as a churchyard.

CHAPTER XII.

OUR FRIENDS, THE ENEMY.



When the Federal Army occupied Fauquier County after the first battle of Manassas, and the people of that county saw the regiments, brigades and divisions of the splendid Army of the Potomac file by, superbly equipped and finely officered, their eyes were opened, and they knew that the conflict was not a glorious pageant, with but a few battles and a speedy independence of the Confederate States, but that it was to be grim-visaged war in earnest, the certain issue of which no prophet could foretell. So, true to their lineage and their blood, these Virginians, figuratively, girded up their loins and made up their minds to be brave and patient, and to endure and suffer if needs be without murmur and without complaint. The Rubicon had been crossed, and the issue lay with the God of battles. So they turned their backs upon their old life and faced the new. The field servants were told they must leave, as all farming would stop, and only the old family servitors would be

retained. All stock was driven south or disposed of to the Government, old family silver and valuables was either sent away or buried, and retrenchment and rigid economy was the order of the day.

At this trying period, a Confederate soldier was rarely seen, for it was not until the third year of the war that Mosby's command was organized, and it was a time when the households were absolutely defenceless, save perhaps some patriarch too old for military service. The whole section was at the mercy of the slaves, and a gang like Nat Turner could have burnt every house and killed every woman and child in Fauquier County had they been so disposed, but the love, the respect, the veneration the slaves had for their masters was their safeguards. There was not a single case of violence shown in the whole section, and the predictions of Henry Lloyd Garrison and other Abolitionists that "when the slaves should have a chance to rise the woods and fields of Virginia would be filled with black men, an axe in one hand and a torch in the other," was not verified. No! if there was ever simple loyalty and child-like trust, the slaves of Fauquier expressed it for their masters. I have heard a score of times the farmers tell of the departure of the servants; every one had a stone in his heart and blinding tears in his eyes. They were free at last; the dumb chattel was a man, but like the Irish emigrant, the freedman turned to gaze at the old plantation where all his life had been spent. Doubtless, to his untutored mind, freedom was the greatest

curse that could come to him. Some few planters sent their slaves South, but not many.

There was quite a difference between the women of Fauquier and the fair dames of New Orleans in their treatment of the Federal officers; especially in New Orleans during Ben Butler's reign. They did not consider it good taste to treat anyone, in their own house, with marked discourtesy. They did not return frowns for smiles or scorn courtliness. Those Virginia girls did not turn up their noses, sweep aside their skirts as if contamination dwelt in a Federal soldier, especially if the man in blue were a gentleman. They could be proud and cold, but never offensive. Many of the officers of the Army of the Potomac were men of the highest grade, graduates of Harvard and Yale, with blood of the bluest; wealthy, cultured and sympathetic, and some, like General Sedgwick, were as knightly as Bayard himself. There was a politic side to the question; courtesy and civility go a long way in this world. But few homes in Fauquier would have been left standing if the kindly overtures of the officers had been met with superciliousness or insult. There is not a house in Mosby's Confederacy that has not at one time or another had guards stationed on the place to prevent pillage, rapine and destruction. Suppose, as frequently happened, a Federal officer approached a house with the kindly offer of aid, and an irate female slams the door in his face, as did the ladies of New Orleans? That officer's feelings would undergo a sudden change,

and it would be but human nature in him not to care a continental whether or not the house was looted first and burned afterward.

There were many beautiful maidens in Mosby's Confederacy, and beauty in distress brings out the better part of a man's nature, and I have heard scores of the Fauquier girls speak in the highest praise of the gallantry and chivalry of the Federal soldiery. In all my investigations I never heard of a Federal officer making an assault on a woman, though many homes were utterly unprotected. This is a grand and glorious record which no defamation can change, or slander or falsehood sully, and it has no parallel in wars of either ancient or modern times.

There were many strikingly handsome men in blue uniform, gallant and debonair. They had all the attractions that should dazzle a maiden, and in camp Mars becomes a devotee to Venus; but all their efforts to beguile the girls of Fauquier into flirtation was literally "love's labor lost." I know of but one instance, and one only, where the love of sex triumphed over the *amor patriae*, and that was Miss Nannie Dixon, a beautiful maiden, who fell madly in love with a Federal captain of cavalry, and gave up, for a time at least, her friends, her country and kinsmen for the belted and spurred dragoon.

To the credit of the Anglo-Saxon race it may be said that the worst pillagers in the Army of the Potomac were men of foreign birth; and after them were the

Pennsylvanians. Many of them were of mixed nationality, who inherited a love of looting, and when the Fauquier people learned that a brigade of Pennsylvanians were going to camp near them, there was a rush to headquarters for a guard. The Irish, the most chivalric race on earth, never once, so far as I could learn, were found guilty of marauding or looting; on the contrary, women in distress found in every Irishman, high and low, big and little, a defender.

A lady living near Warrenton told me that one summer evening she and her sister, a lovely young girl, were sitting in the dining-room. The household originally consisted of the women and two men, but now Mr. Taylor was employed in the Nitre and Mining Bureau in the Richmond Armory, her brother was a soldier in Lee's Army, and only these two women remained to take care of the house. As if by magic, the place was surrounded by a squad of Bluecoats. The two women rushed into the porch and saw at least a score of cavalymen, who were congregated in the front yard. They proved to be a detachment who had separated from the main body and were riding from house to house to pillage. To Mrs. Taylor's anxious inquiries for the officer in command, they mocked and jeered her, and declared that they commanded themselves, and had come to search the house for Rebels. The lady declared there were no persons on the premises but herself and daughter. The squad started up the steps, when the young girl, divining their intention,

threw herself in front of them, and with tears streaming down her face begged them not to enter, that they were but two defenceless women, but if one or two would go through the house she would conduct them. The crowd surged upward and onward, and seemed bent upon rushing over her. Among the squad was an Irishman, a mere lad, but he proved to be a hero. He jumped to the door, drew his revolver, cocked it, and told his comrades that he would shoot the first man who entered the house. The girl, with the quick perception born with woman, moved a few steps and stood beside him. There were angry mutterings on the part of the men, and some fingered their carbines, but the son of Erin never flinched. The girl told me years afterward that it was the most splendid sight she ever witnessed: the young, stalwart soldier, his frame rigid as a statue, his jaw set, and his blue eyes sparkling like the reflection of the sun on polished steel. It was a striking tableau that was photographed on her brain, and she often recalled the scene with vivid force. The house was left unmolested, but when the two women poured warm thanks on their protector, the gallant Irishman, confused and bashful, broke away, mounted his horse and rode at break-neck speed to rejoin his comrades.

Another instance of the high-grade Yankee soldier occurred in the lower part of the county. Rochefoucauld says that gratitude is but a lively expectation of favors yet to come, but it remained for a boy in blue to prove, in one instance at least, that the cynical

Frenchman was wrong, and also that "good can come out of Nazareth."

On the road from Morrisville to Fredericksburg there stands a handsome mansion called Cold Spring, owned by a young man named Bruce Stringfellow, who was a cavalryman in Fitz Lee's Brigade. His mother and sisters, dreading to live in that war-ravaged section, left home and plantation to its fate; and but for one woman there would not have been left one plank above another. An empty house did not long remain intact in Mosby's Confederacy. Bruce had an aunt, Miss Sue Gutheridge, a spinster about thirty years old. Miss Sue was a regular Amazon; nearly six feet tall, spare and muscular. She did not know what fear meant; she was a large-hearted, large-minded woman, and with all her heart and mind she loved the Southland. She would, at intervals, hitch up to an ancient wagon, and securing by hook or crook passes to Alexandria, would return laden with quinine and opium, and clothes for her soldier friends. Many of the Black Horsemen were indebted to her for comfortable flannels; and she gave me a fine pair of buckskin gauntlets of which I was inordinately proud. Cold Spring, her home, was the favorite rendezvous of the Black Horsemen, but none were ever captured, as there was a dense covert of pines close to the house, and Miss Sue kept vigil herself if any of the scouts remained overnight. The house had often been searched, but it was always as empty as Mother Hubbard's cupboard.

One evening in the autumn of 1864 Miss Sue was sitting on the porch, when there approached a Yankee cavalryman. He was on foot, his clothing torn, hands and face scratched, and evidently he was badly frightened. He was a young fellow about eighteen, and coming to where Miss Sue sat, saluted her, trembling and gasping for breath. He had been running at top speed. She motioned him to take a seat and rest. As he sat there panting and fanning himself with his cap, Miss Sue scrutinized him narrowly, for she suspected this might be only a Yankee trick. But the lad was so young, his face so honest, his eyes so true, that she dismissed her suspicions for good and all. After recovering his breath he told his tale. He was a private in the Fifth Michigan Cavalry, and several miles below his detachment, which had been on a scout to the Rappahannock River, were passing along the old Fredericksburg pike, when his horse fell suddenly lame. Dismounting, he found a stone wedged in the hoof of the front foot. He got a rock and began to hammer the stone. The squadron was fully a couple of hundred yards away when he was ready to mount. Suddenly a Rebel soldier on foot darted from the pines and ordered him to surrender. This he did, and as the Rebel seized his horse he tried to escape and rejoin his regiment. He darted into the pines and started in the direction of his troop, but the woods seemed full of Rebels, for he was shot at several times. He plunged into the thickest of the pines, and losing all sense of

locality he ran until he dropped. Then he kept on until he reached the house, and seeing her sitting on the porch determined to approach and throw himself on her mercy, and begged her to let him stay until next morning as he was afraid of being bushwhacked. He added that he was a country boy and would help her in any way if she would only keep him safe. Miss Sue told him he could remain over night, and that no Confederate soldier would harm him so long as he was under her protection.

Now it may seem strange that a Southern woman should protect a Yankee soldier, especially when she could have quietly sent for some of the Black Horsemen and have given him up as a prisoner, but there were two objections to such a step: one was the youth of the soldier, and his having thrown himself unreservedly on her protection touched her; and after she had given her promise she would never have swerved from it. Another reason was that the scouts hated to be bothered with prisoners, for it meant a long journey across a barren country to reach Orange Court House, where the provost-marshal had his headquarters, so the scouts preferred to set their single prisoners free rather than to take that disagreeable journey wherein they received no thanks from anyone. Of course if a number of the enemy were captured it was different, but for one or two prisoners, why, they were not worth the bother.

That evening the boy pitched in, brought water from the spring, cut wood, milked the cow, groomed the old

horse, and actually insisted on polishing the huge brass andirons in the parlor fireplace. Miss Sue cooked for him a good supper, and gave him a room in the attic. The next morning he rushed things, and did more work about the farm before the setting of the sun than the average darkey could do in a week. He gained the confidence of Miss Sue to the extent of her showing him where she kept her horse and cow in the woods. That evening, sitting by the fire, he told Miss Sue all about his home life in far-off Michigan, said that he had entered a preparatory school, intending, eventually, to enter the medical profession, and that he never had intended to take part in the war, as his people were Democrats, but when Fort Sumter was fired upon he, with most of the lads in that section, enlisted in the army to save the Union.

Miss Sue tried to persuade him to desert and offered to land him safe in Alexandria, but he said he would die first. The girl saw that in fighting for the Union he was actuated by a high sense of duty, and his truth and earnestness so impressed her that the haunting fear that he would divulge the secret of her horse and cow was dissipated forever.

One evening when "Denny," the soldier boy, was away in the woods attending to his self-imposed duties, a detachment of Federal cavalry halted near the house. They were in a vile humor, for a squad of the Black Horse had dashed into their rear guard, killed and wounded several, and captured about a dozen horses

and a wagon and team of mules. They surged into the house, and there is no telling what they would have done, for some of the men called the house a damned bushwhacker's den, when Denny appeared on the scene. He told the officer how Miss Sue had saved him from capture and had taken good care of him, that the country was so full of Rebels that he dared not go to Fredericksburg alone, and that but for her he would now be dead or a prisoner. His tale, truly told, had a potential effect, and the black looks changed to smiles. The officer thanked Miss Sue, and when Denny told her goodby he said: "Miss Sue, I think better of the Sessech than I ever did before." Her answer was as quick and impulsive as his. "Goodby, Denny, I hope you will get through the war safe. There are some good Yankees, after all."

All this I gathered from Miss Sue a short time after, when she gave me the splendid pair of gauntlets she had bought in Alexandria. Miss Sue saved the house, and at the end of the war turned it over intact to her nephew. It was a brave, heroic act for her to remain there by herself for three long years. But of such components were the women in those parts in those days.



THE OLD POPLAR IN ASHBY'S GAP.

Every general of both armies has rested
underneath its sheltering arms.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE OLD POPLAR TREE AT ASHBY'S GAP.

The most famous mountain pass in America is Ashby's Gap, for that historic spot was, during the Civil War, the gateway in the Blue Ridge Mountains through which the armies of the Blue and the Gray defiled when passing to and fro from the Valley of Virginia to the Piedmont section. The spot is full of glamour and romance, and if the old poplar tree which crowns the southern summit could only speak and tell what has occurred beneath its branches, it would require a Walter Scott to do justice to the theme, for beneath its shade thousands of the bravest and most daring of North Americans have paused for a moment to wipe the dust from their eyes and let their glance sweep over the splendid scene where the glorious Valley lay at their feet, and the swift waters of the Shenandoah could be seen wending their way like a silver cord through the landscape. Within its shadow Lee, sitting on his horse Traveler, had often paused, and with the aid of his field glass swept the country below. There, also, on his raw-boned sorrel, Stonewall Jackson paused before he struck McDowell's flank at Manassas. Stuart, the great cavalryman of the Army of Northern

Virginia, has scores of times, under its shelter, bared his head to catch the cool breeze that always blows at this high altitude. Every general of note of both armies has rested underneath its sheltering arms, and within a stone's throw of it uncounted thousands of soldiery have reposed at ease. This spot was a favorite rendezvous of Mosby's partisans, and many a rich haul from the Federal camps in the Valley was divided at this tree. At times, when a detachment of the Rangers had captured some sutler's huge wagon, a veritable department store on wheels, the vehicle was driven up to the poplar tree, and as soon as a pursuing force was sighted the mules were unhitched, and carrying the Rough Riders disappeared in a cloud of dust.

This tree was also a favorite meeting place for lovers, and more vows have been exchanged of deathless devotion, more troths plighted under its boughs, than there were leaves on its branches; and certainly during the three years of the war there was more of the love-making business performed under its twenty feet of foliage than in any similar space in Dixie.

The place is full of both tender and glorious memories, and standing there on a summer's day one can fancy that the roar of the falls in the Shenandoah is the sound of the Yankee war shouts, and that the tic-tac of the distant railroad car was the rat-a-plan of Lee's drums. The cloud of dust raised by the wagons toiling along the highway resolves itself into a mist through

which breaks a column of Bluecoats, with Custer at their head, thundering down the pike.

Nine miles east of the Gap is the house of Mr. Lake, where Mosby received through his body a bullet fired by Corporal Kane of the 13th New York Cavalry. Mosby was sitting in the room after supper, the Federals surrounded the house, and the corporal, standing without, shot him through the window, not knowing who he was, but recognizing the Confederate officer's uniform that Mosby wore. This was bushwhacking pure and simple.

About two miles from Mr. Lake's is a farm called Heartland, which was the headquarters of Mosby. A few miles from the Gap was born one of the most magnificent soldiers that ever swung himself into saddle. Turner Ashby first saw the light October 23, 1828. He was the third child of Col. Turner Ashby and Dorothea Green. He received the ordinary education, going to country schools, where rudiments of the three R's were eagerly imbibed by him. He became a country merchant, and but for the war would, doubtless, have been known only as a peaceable, quiet citizen with a fad for horses. A pen picture of him when at Harper's Ferry during the first year of the war says: "He was of low stature; his face a striking one, very dark, heavily bearded, and the way he wore his slouch hat made him look like *Fra Diavolo* himself." From a sergeant he rose by rapid strides to be a brigadier-

general, and commanded all the cavalry in the Valley under Jackson. He was Stonewall's right arm, and like his immortal superior he proved to be a born leader. Ashby was by nature a cavalryman, and his home was in the saddle. His military gifts were of the highest order, and had he lived, and been permitted to lead, it is certain that he would have become one of the greatest cavalry commanders the world ever saw. A chance bullet ended his life in the spring of 1862.

A short distance from Ashby's Gap is the home of the Fautleroy's. Colonel Fautleroy at the beginning of the war was commanding the First United States Dragoons. He was considered one of the most brilliant soldiers of the old army. When Virginia seceded Colonel Fautleroy resigned his commission and hastened to Richmond to offer his sword to his native State. Of all the Southern army officers, General Fautleroy held the highest rank at the time of his resignation. He overtopped General Lee by several numbers in the old service. He was promptly commissioned general by the convention and appointed to command the city of Richmond, and to place that city in a state of defence.

When the Confederate Government was reorganized it published a call for all Southern born officers in the United States army to come home and join the forces of the South, and they pledged their faith and honor that those officers who resigned their commis-

sions in the regular army should have equal service under the new government, and that their regular rank should not be altered.

General Fauntleroy made an enemy of President Davis. He was too blunt a soldier to pay court to king or kaiser, and Mr. Davis broke the plighted faith of his government by placing officers of inferior rank over General Fauntleroy. This the proud officer would not stand; and thus Mr. Davis forced from the service a great warrior whom he did not like, and favored General Huger (a Northerner), Pemberton and Bragg. Alas, for the South!

There were many fine estates around Ashby's Gap. On the road leading from the Gap to Warrenton is Chief Justice John Marshall's. Then there is Pagebrook, a fine colonial mansion, still standing, and if the old walls could talk, what interesting tales they could tell of the ancient time when unstinted hospitality kept the doors wide open to all who entered within the gates. Rokeby was another splendid estate near the Gap. It was the home of Colonel Langborn, a Virginia gentleman of the old school, a sportsman, a literatus, and very wealthy. Like Pagebrook, this house was a place of princely hospitality. There were scores of fine plantations in this portion of Fauquier, known as the bluegrass section of Virginia. Wheat, corn and cattle were the main products, but in the third year of the war neither sheaf, shock nor hoof was seen, and solitude

and stagnation reigned, and any traveler in those days could rein up his horse, grasp his gun and exclaim like Crusoe, "I am sole monarch of all I survey."

Not far from the Gap dwelt a middle-aged woman who was as marked a character in Fauquier as Meg Merriles was in Bannockburn. This valley spinster was named Nancy Benn. She lived alone on a small farm; but this unprotected female could take care of herself even in the troublous war time, for she was noted for her utter fearlessness, violent temper, and a tongue that was swung in the middle. She was (as the marchioness called Sally Brass) "a regular oner." Her farm was situated on the banks of the Shenandoah, not far from the ferry. In the peaceful days a cable was stretched across the river at this point and a large flat-bottomed scow conveyed man and beast from shore to shore. When Stonewall Jackson's men crossed over the river to strike McClellan's flank near Richmond, the rearguard filled this old craft, which was named *Jeff Davis*, with wood, set it on fire, and sent it spinning down the the river. The scow, careening, half filled with water, which quickly put out the blaze. Then it settled on a sand bar and it lay for some time. When the Federals resumed their former position on the Shenandoah, the old boat tightened, cleaned and thoroughly repaired, was once again doing business at the old stand.

Now it happened that the troops guarding the ferry were a part of Bleuker's Dutch Division, and they had

the reputation of being the most persistent foragers and unscrupulous pillagers in the Army of the Potomac. It is said that even the chickens and geese would strike for the woods when they heard the Dutch language spoken. A squad of these Hessians descended upon Miss Nancy's habitation and took all of her fowls, and worse still, killed her pet pig. Miss Nancy put on her war paint and started for the Federal camp, where she created almost as much commotion as the beating of the long roll. Finding she could get no redress for her stolen property, she let her tongue loose on them—and Miss Nancy could hold her own with any fish-wife in Billingsgate. She uttered enough treason to have packed the old capitol with the disloyal. The stolid Dutch could not understand her; she then appealed to the officers, but they could do nothing, and only shrugged their shoulders as the torrent of invective rolled from her lips. She was standing in the boat as she delivered her harangue, and waving her arms frantically ended by crying: "You have stole my chickens, my pig and my corn, and I hope them Dutch who robbed me may cross the river in old *Jeff Davis*, and that it will sink and drown every thieving, rascalion Yankee in it."

The very next day the catastrophe happened. Mr. Curtis Chappellear, living near the ferry, wrote to the *Winchester Times*: "A party of Dutch soldiers, including one woman, went on board the *Jeff Davis* and started for the other side of the river. On reaching

the current the boat capsized, and twenty-five were drowned. Among those rescued was the woman, whose hoopskirt acted as a life preserver."



The curse of Nancy Benn is one of the traditions of Mosby's Confederacy. In the olden days Nancy would have been burned for a witch as being in league with the devil.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE YANKEE BALL AT THE WARREN GREEN.

Captain Mountjoy expected to go, but—

It was the Christmas of 1863 and the holiday was observed by the grandest ball that was ever given in Warrenton. Of course in the olden days the wealthy planters had many a party that would have done honor to the court of a king; and on such occasions up the five roads leading into the town filed the cumberson family carriages, each with its coat of arms painted on the door, the coachman and footman in livery. The minuet was danced by as wholesome, sweet maidens as could be found in any principality in the "far off countree;" and when the beaux and belles in brave attire swung to and fro in the mazy dance, and the vigor and dash of Sir Roger de Coverly put life and metal in their heels, we may be sure it was a goodly sight. There were numberless "blow-outs" in the old burg, for the people were a mirth-loving race, and the gentry were ready to celebrate any event by rout or ball, and the old Warren Green was the scene of many a pleasure-seeking crowd. But none of them ever equaled in cost, splendor, equipments, decorations, or in gowns and jewels, the famous

Yankee ball of the winter of 1863. The room was a mass of color; the green holly with its red berries intertwined with costly hothouse roses, and the national colors, festooned and furled, covered every inch of the wall. Lamps with metal reflectors made an admirable substitute for gas, and showed off effectively the wealth of color in the room.

A select clique of officers of the Army of the Potomac had been making preparations for the coming festivities for weeks. In fact, the Warren Green was the only ballroom in that whole region.

Among the thousands of shoulder straps and epaulets, only a hundred constituted the coterie that was the pick and select of the whole army. It was mostly a line and staff affair, and—good Lord! if a private soldier with his blue blouse had strayed into the crowd of gold-laced warriors he soon would have wished that he had never been born. For the private to go would be the proper thing, looking through our spectacles; for the private was actuated by the same feeling of loyalty to his country, and was risking his life in the same cause as his officer. Yet the distinction of rank was so great that for a private soldier in the ranks to have stepped in and offered his arm to the belle of the ball would have occasioned as much astonishment as if a costermonger should, having wormed his way into a court reception, greeted the Lord High Chamberlain by slapping him familiarly on the back.

Patriotism, fighting for the old flag, and whooping

up "old glory" did not make the rank and file friendly and chummy, and with the private soldiers, if the truth must be told, sentiment had languished and died like many other heroic emotions that had for the nonce thrilled the public heart.

In the third year of the Civil War all volunteering had ceased in the North, and substitutes were worth the price of likely slaves, anywhere from \$1500 to \$2000 spot cash each. The wild enthusiasm that marked the rising of the mighty North, like the lion aroused from his slumber, and that had the first year filled the ranks with all kinds and conditions of men, was now a thing of the past. The war had, to the North, become a business of desperate resolve and bloody purpose; and no man would remain a private in the ranks if he had money, influence or brains; indeed, it was tantamount to serving as a laborer to a boss contractor. In the South it was, paradoxical as it may seem, a greater honor to wear the gray jacket of a private than the stars or bars of a staff officer, for the wealthiest and brightest youths in the land were but plain "Johnny Rebs." Hence at every dinner, rally, banquet and dance the common gray jacket of the private and the gold-laced coat of the officer rubbed elbows in perfect equality. To see a gaunt, ragged Reb, clad in his smoke-begrimed, sun-faded gray, his only suit (God save the mark)—to see this tatterdemalion sail in and walk away with the belle of the ballroom on his arm, under the eyes of the well-fed, well-groomed

general of division, resplendent in his new uniform, was a spectacle to be seen nowhere on God's green earth but in the Confederate States of America.

But there was no prospect of the blue blouses intruding on the ball that night. Whether the Grayjackets might put in an appearance was an open question; certainly, in the minds of many a booted and spurred partisan there had been dreams of attending the festivities, and of making the Duchess of Richmond ball at Brussels look, in comparison, like a Punch and Judy show. And if there were any of the fair Northerners who pined for a sensation they would be satisfied to their heart's content.

Wherever trouble is brewing, conspiracies being made, or an unfathomable mystery, the Frenchman shrugs his shoulders and propounds the query: "*Qui femme?*" And the prospective attendance of the Grayjackets at the Yankee ball originated, of course, with a woman.

Warrenton was at that time garrisoned by one regiment of cavalry, the Eighth Illinois, a superb body of men. Merritt's brigade was at Three Mile Station, midway between the town and Warrenton Junction, distant six miles; and Kilpatrick's division of cavalry were in winter quarters at the latter place.

The town of Warrenton possessed no strategic importance; but on account of the spacious stores and warehouses it was a fine depot of supply, and the topography of the country made it a good place for a

horse corral, several thousands of which were herded near the town.

Now Mosby's command had been casting longing eyes in the direction of Warrenton, and they knew if they could sweep the town of the Federal troops they would make the richest haul in history, except, perhaps, Forrest's raid on Holly Spring, Miss., when he captured Grant's supplies.

There lived in Warrenton at that time three maidens named Lucas, and each was a belle by the royal dower of Nature, who had gifted them with beauty; in the words of the poet, "they were fair to look upon;" but the youngest, Annie, a girl in her teens, was transcendently lovely. Helen, who filled the hearts of the Grecian youths, and also the Trojan warriors, could not have excelled her in form, in face or in carriage. Her beauty will always be a tradition in Virginia. Annie was bright in mind and possessed that rare gift, tact, which, united to her charming presence, made her irresistible. There were always horses hitched to her palings, for she did not hesitate to entertain the Federal officers, and whereas most of the Warrenton girls eyed them askance, the fair Annie gave them her brightest smiles. But she did so with a purpose. Her table was littered with flowers and fruit, her kitchen stocked with dainty food, and she was adored by soldiers of every rank, from a surgeon's orderly to the general of a crack cavalry brigade. Annie was sweet sixteen, and to see her was to forget

all other women. She was affianced to the handsomest, brightest and bravest rough rider that ever swung himself into saddle. He was Captain Mountjoy, Mosby's right hand man, and the hero of many a deadly game of "dare and do." Mountjoy was the pride and boast of the partisans, and while the Rangers feared and trusted Mosby implicitly, they simply loved Mountjoy, for he was a man of great bonhomie; and, like Mercutio, had a sunny glance and warm greeting for all the world (outside of the blue uniform).

Now the winsome Annie kept her lover advised of all the military and social news of the little town, and while the citizens of Warrenton found it impossible to convey the smallest note to their friends in Mosby's Confederacy, Annie sent her letters to her lady friends in Oakspring, and they were carried by a courier of a colonel of cavalry, who was smitten by the charms of this Virginia Circe. The colonel was old enough to be her father, and should have known better than to think that because a maiden was so young, so gentle, and so fair, she would not raise the devil if she got a chance. As Washington Irving said: "Women, thou art the author of so many follies in man that it will require all the tears of the recording angel to wash them out."

The officers in charge of the ball had invited all the society girls of Warrenton to attend, and when some gave as reason for not attending, like Flora McFlimsy, that "they had nothing to wear," the gallant gentlemen offered to have the most fashionable modiste in

Washington summoned, with samples, to give a *carte blanche* order for any gowns they might choose. That some of the girls were sorely tempted would only be stating it mildly. They had lived between the lines for nearly two years, and the hermit-like existence did not appeal to them; and then the splendid supper, with oysters, game, salads, cream and wine, was an allure-ment indeed to those healthy girls, who had for months been living on salt pork and cow beans, washed down with sassafras tea or parched corn coffee, sweetened with sorghum. But the love of country rose superior to the cravings for the world, the flesh and the devil, and so without a single exception they declined. One of them wrote to a friend in Richmond: "If it had been in the days of peace and plenty we would have been enchanted, but, with our boys in the dreary camps, walking their beats, keeping lonely vigil on the picket post, half-clad and faint with hunger, while we were clasped in the arms of the enemy, revolving in a waltz, or drinking their wine, was a situation that was unthinkable, and so we all declined with thanks."

Annie Lucas wrote all these details to her lover, and Mountjoy, who was commanding the Rangers, for Mosby was on wounded furlough, saw that the golden opportunity had arrived. If he could close in on that ball he would make a greater capture of officers than was made in any great battle of the Civil War. So one of the girls at Oakspring sent a note to Annie, saying that "Montie would certainly be there;" and thus Annie

knew that her lover would attend the ball with twice one hundred dare-devils at his back, and that the Rangers would participate in three things they loved best in life—frolic, fun and a fight.

The coming ball at the Warren Green was the subject of much thought on the part of the commandant of the Federal post at Warrenton. He, being an old veteran, knew that the presence of so many officers of high rank in town would offer a big temptation for the Rebs to try to capture them. It would not do to call for additional force to protect the revellers. Such a step would be resented by both officers and privates alike. After deep cogitation a bright thought struck him; he would wire the town. So on the very morning of the day of the ball he had a large force closing all the streets excepting those leading to their own camps. Every thoroughfare save one on the outskirts of the town was closed by two telegraph wires stretched from curb to curb; one was about knee-high, the other seven feet from the ground; the first was designed to trip the horse, the other to sweep the rider from his saddle.

When Annie Lucas saw the wires she was stricken with horror and her heart was torn by conflicting emotions. What had she done! At that moment she felt she had lured to destruction scores of the brightest, bravest youths in the land. In imagination she beheld the charging line, and heard the wild piercing yell; then she saw horses and riders go down, the riders swept from their saddles; then rattling volleys poured in on



"She handed him a blue veil."

the prostrate jumble of men and beasts, and exultant cheers changed to cries of terror and distress. Her lover, always in the van leading his men in the charge, would be first to be hurled panting and bleeding to the frozen earth. And it was all her work! No wonder she was appalled. Few women had ever been forced to go through such an ordeal; and not one in a thousand would pass through it unnerved. Most women would have become panic stricken and have sought for counsel, and such wild consternation would have ensued that suspicion of the true state of affairs would have reached the authorities and caused them to be doubly on the alert. All this the girl knew, and she felt that the crisis must be met by her, and her alone. But how? No one, not even Doctor Chilton, sent for on several occasions, was allowed to leave town on his errand of mercy. It was impossible; but Mahomet says "a woman can dance where a man dare not crawl," and so this young woman met the crisis. She went to the Federal colonel and handed him a blue veil, asking him, in a nonchalant manner, to return the veil that very day to a dear lady friend at the Blackwells, whose home was near Paris in the county. No sooner had she handed him the article than the colonel summoned his orderly and directed him to leave the veil at Oakspring. With a careless smile and a word of thanks the girl left the room, her heart lighter, and her very soul singing for joy.

The sun was slanting to the west when the sound of

pounding hoof-beats on the flinty turnpike near the Oakspring caught the listening ear of one of the Blackwells, and soon the whole family were on the porch. They saw a cavalryman enter the lane, swing around by the barn and stop his horse at the hitching post. The man slipped from the saddle, advanced towards the ladies, made a military salute, and presented a package, with the explanation that the lady had returned the borrowed veil. He quickly mounted and galloped out of sight before they had time to recover from their astonishment.

The veil passed from hand to hand; it belonged neither to the Blackwells nor to any of their guests; none of them had loaned such an article. They examined it carefully. It was a plain blue veil, and nothing more. They discussed the mysterious thing and made many guesses, and in ordinary times they would have come to the conclusion that it had been left at the wrong house, or that a mistake had simply been made, and then the matter would have been forgotten. But living in a section where "war's horrid front" was unmasked, the women's wits were sharpened, and when anything unusual occurred it meant something, and that something might be a matter of life and death. So that trifles light as air were investigated, and the smallest trifle was sometimes pregnant with meaning. So in this case a common blue veil was the arbiter of the fate of many brave, gallant youths, radiant with life and hope. Only a blue veil to decide whether they would greet the

coming day with song and laughter, or ice cold and pulseless!

Several of the household examined the veil carefully, then flung it aside; but there was one girl who said: "Annie Lucas would never have sent that veil without a motive. I know her too well, and it means something very grave and important, as she could not write it." So the girl got a needle and began to prick through the fabric, and at one corner of the hem discovered resistance. Then with scissors the stitches were cut; and there concealed was a tiny piece of tissue paper, with these brief words: "Town wired, tell Montie not to come."

In the room occupied by the band, all hidden from view, could be seen a miniature Vanity Fair, where mortals were at their best, and where Laughter, that rosy-lipped daughter of Joy, reigned undisputed queen. Annie Lucas, chaperoned by that grand, noble woman, Mrs. Tongue, sat in the darkest part of the gallery, where, at last finding themselves all unnoticed, the two breathed freer and soon began to take note of their surroundings.

It was a gorgeous scene that night in the old tavern of Warrenton, and there was more vim, warmth and passion in that one ball than in a dozen affairs arranged by the citizens in the humdrum days of peace. Every man there was a warrior, seasoned and tried on many a battlefield, and different from the little, dapper things in swallow-tails that one sees nowadays at routs and

receptions. The women, sisters and fiancées of the soldiers who had come down to visit were the fairest of the Northland; and treading the measure of the cotillion or keeping step to the *deux temp* of the waltz, in a strange tavern within the enemy's territory, who might at any moment swoop down and capture them, gave a piquancy and nervous delight such as they had never experienced before. How many of those queenly women would have paled with fear had they possessed the secret of the maiden hidden in the gallery, who sat there waiting in the best place to see and hear, were Montie to come to the ball. The girl knew her lover's indomitable spirit, and she feared that, even though he received her note, he would not alter his plans, and would attend, though he bore no invitation card.

The partisans were nocturnal and preferred to strike their enemy after sunset. That great warrior, old Suvarof, declared that all men were cowards in the dark. Certainly, even trained troops attacked in pitchy obscurity will go all to pieces.

There have been only two instances where veterans undertook nocturnal warfare: one was when General Gordon made a night attack on Grant's lines in the Wilderness and caused a whole army corps to stampede. Gordon captured General Saylor and his entire brigade, amounting to five thousand men.

Another, and better illustration of the truth of the old Russian's assertion, was given at Cedar Creek. The splendid army of Sheridan, veterans of many bat-

bles, inured to every species of warfare, who did not know what a rout meant, were camped, at the end of an arduous campaign, on the Shenandoah River. The Confederate forces under Early were on the opposite side of the Massanuttan Mountain. The Federals had their flanks well watched by the cavalry, and felt secure against any surprise. General Gordon, who was made Lieutenant-General the year after, crossed the mountain by a blind trail, forded the river, and just before dawn of day he struck the sleeping army of Federals precisely as Marco Bozaris did the Persian hordes, and with the same result. Sheridan's stricken army broke for the rear; only one division kept its formation, and Gordon, in his book, says that he had trained sixty cannons on this remnant, and had given orders to the chief of artillery to let loose, when Early, who commanded the army, appeared upon the scene and ordered Gordon to stop all offensive movements. Gordon says he was stricken dumb. Early reiterated his order, and concluded by saying: "Stop fighting, General Gordon, we have won enough glory for one day." It was something new to those ragged Rebs to learn what they were fighting for, and they could not be convinced that glory would fill their empty bellies or shoe their bare feet.

The rest is history: how Sheridan arrived on the scene and spent the rest of the day reorganizing his scattered army, and then advanced and inflicted a crushing defeat on his foe. And Gen. Jubal Early, who had his fill of glory in the early morning, was seen rac-

ing in the late evening for the woods, a flimsy halo of glory around his head, and a flask of whiskey in his pocket.

By long practice Mosby's partisans brought their night attacks to a fine art. They had, by constant training, learned to keep cool and collected, and in the blackest night to be in touch with one another; and when charging the enemy and getting mixed up with them in the darkness they were at their best; and there, amid the plunging horses, the explosion of firearms, the screams of the stricken, the hoarse shouts of command, the frenzied outcries of the panic-stricken, the gasping ejaculations of the bewildered, half-awakened soldiery, the Rebel yell splitting the night air, high-pitched and clear and distinct above the uproar, the partisans were as much at home as the stormy petrel that revels in the violence and turbulence of the tempest. They never fired at random, and by the flash of the weapons they could tell friend from foe; and when they pulled trigger the bullet went to its mark. Besides, the partisans were picked men from the whole Army of Northern Virginia, and if one showed timidity or backwardness he was sent back to the regulars.

Throughout the long hours the girl and her companion sat at the hotel, waiting and watching for the coming of her lover, not with flying footsteps and murmured words, but with the thundering hoof-strokes and the vibrant yell. But as the hours passed and he came not, she uttered a prayer of thanksgiving. The night



MISS ANNIE LUCAS.

waned, the lights burned dim, the air grew thick, and the mirth changed into revelry, the wine had fired the blood, the light embrace of the waltz changing to a passionate caress, and the voluptuous strains of the music had brought a flush to many a fair cheek and set many a heart to beating wildly. The brilliant glance of the eye had changed into voluptuous languor that caused the snowy bosom to rise and fall like the ocean tide kissed by the moonlight. Suddenly came the sound of galloping horses; the girl arose, with eyes aflame. She grew hot and cold by turns. Had Montie come at last to the ball? The sound rose above the strains of the German waltz, came closer, then died away. It was but a relief of the guard of the outpost. The two women stole out in the quiet street. Dawn was breaking, and the air was keen and cold, but neither felt the chill, for their hearts were light, and they were warmed by the fires of a great love and thanksgiving. The ball was over, and the partisans had not come. The Southern girl's note had saved many a precious life. The joy in Annie Lucas' heart was another evidence

“* * * That surest way to win the prize
Of tender glance from beauty's eyes
Is not at ball or festal board,
But at the front with flashing sword.”

CHAPTER XV.

ONE GAY AND FESTIVE NIGHT IN MOSBY'S CONFEDERACY.

During all the winters spent in Mosby's Confederacy I never attended but one entertainment, and that was a memorable one.

This occurred at Cool Spring, where Miss Sue Gutheridge, as told before, lived her solitary life, her only companions being a cat and a dog, which from long companionship seemed to consider their mistress as the only individual that existed. All the rest of the world were shadows, but like the hump-back Richard, shadows cast more terror on these souls than anything that breathed. When a visitor entered the front door the dog and cat retired by the back door and remained away unseen, but not unheard. Distant growls and yowls could be heard from the dim recesses of the forest. Miss Sue was like Madame Du Farge in the days of the Terror: cold, calm and resolute. She was physically the bravest woman I ever met in Mosby's Confederacy. I don't believe she would have screamed if a mouse had run up her skirts. Yet withal no gentler woman heart ever beat beneath bodice or stay. She had an individuality so

strong that after people met her they never forgot her. Withal she was womanly and refined.

When her uncle, who was about her age, wanted her to move within the Confederate lines, she positively refused to leave her ancestral roof-tree; and there alone, except an old family servant, the cat and dog, she remained during the war. She rendered great service to the cause she loved so well; and she saved the old family mansion from destruction.

Miss Sue would often run the blockade and go to Baltimore; and thus she imperiled her life and her liberty again and again. She would return with precious supplies for the sorely pressed people, such as percussion caps, quinine and other medicines; and always brought back from each trip an assortment of buckskin gauntlets and spurs as presents for her friends in the Black Horse Cavalry. Her adventures when running the blockade across the Potomac would fill a book.

In the winter of '64 Bruce Stringfellow paid a visit to the old home, and Miss Sue determined to give him a warm welcome.

The Federal cavalry division under General Merritt was camped about a couple of miles away; but that did not disturb Miss Sue, nor deter her, after she had made up her mind to give a party that should eclipse anything ever seen in that part of the county, or the State either, for that matter.

For a couple of weeks before Christmas she was

busy with preparations, and actually got a pass from a Federal general to go to Alexandria with her cart and horse, and returned well-laden. On this, as on her other trips north, she carried but little money, for the Southern people on the north side of the Potomac joyously furnished her with everything she asked for.

Miss Sue planned her party as a general would plan a campaign. The most profound secrecy was necessary. If her intentions became common property uninvited guests, the gentlemen in blue, would come in squadrons; and the Rebel scouts "tripping the light fantastic toe" would soon be dancing to another measure.

Miss Sue visited the farmhouses for several miles around and chose the prettiest girls for her guests, and insisted that "mum was the word."

In the days of peace and prosperity the idea of a score of girls keeping their lips sealed about a glorious entertainment would have been farcical, but in the Debatable Land the women had learned by woeful experience that "silence is golden" and that an incautious word might bring death to some soldier. So when Christmas came the girls were ready, and not even the negro servants in some of their homes had heard a word of the impending event.

About fifteen miles from the Stringfellow plantation was the Martin house, the rendezvous of the Black Horse, and about twenty of the "cracks" of the company assembled there on Christmas eve. Christmas morn-

ing this squad, under command of Sergeant Martin, the son of our host, started for Stringfellow's. We reached there late in the day without any incident and received a warm welcome. "Now," said Miss Sue, "after you boys have had dinner and fed your horses, each of you must go after some girl and bring her back behind you, riding 'pillion,' for but few of them have horses or escorts." Then she gave the name of one maiden to each cavalryman, who at once started in a gallop on his errand.

By dark all the scouts had returned with their precious burdens.

When I look back upon those Civil War times and think of the purity and goodness of those Borderland women, and the absolute trust and faith they had in the man who wore the gray jacket, it seems to me that the men and women lived in another age. Each cavalryman treated his charge as though she was his own sister, and I think—nay, I know—that if any of those scouts had uttered an indecent remark about these maidens he would have been shot—no, riddled by his comrades.

If the women of Mosby's Confederacy held the Rebel cavalrymen dear, we held the women dearer. Their unceasing efforts on our behalf brought out the noblest and the best in man's nature, and the tenderness and regard we felt and expressed for those girls of the Debatable Land would have done honor to the most glowing days of chivalry.

It was the brilliant, beautiful and ill-fated Madame

Roland who said that the noblemen of the Empire never esteemed the women of France at their true worth until the days of the "Terror."

What a dance that was! Lasting from Thursday night and going on spasmodically at intervals for forty-eight hours. The horses of the Black Horse were concealed in a pine coppice about a hundred yards from the house, and the girls—*Dieu vous garde*—would not let the cavalrymen keep watch. One stood at the front porch and the other in the rear, and Miss Sue took charge of the reliefs. If the alarm should be given every light was to be extinguished, and the scouts were to steal silently and without confusion to their horses, which were fastened to a tree by a halter with a slip knot. These scouts, trained by years of border warfare, could reach each his own horse in the darkest night as well as by day. There is a sixth sense that men possess when inured to danger, and these men had the coolness and nerve. To have captured the picked men of the Black Horse would have been a feather in the cap of any general. The Black Horsemen, to a man, expected to have to make a run for it, and the girls, too, but not one flinched, and if any felt that they were dancing on the thin crust of a volcano, the strained expectancy did not check their rippling laughter nor show itself in their bright eyes and rosy cheeks.

There were four fiddlers, all ancient darkies who could be trusted implicitly, and they played in couples, turn and turn about, except at the winding up on Satur-



"Danced as they never danced before."

day night by a Virginia reel, when the whole quartette, with an extra allowance of applejack, played as they never played before for men and women who danced as they never danced before, for life was short.

Oh, the pity of it! Exactly one-third of those gallant youths, before the year rolled around, were wan, weak and crippled from wounds from shot, shell and sabre, and seven of the twenty cavalrymen at the end of Grant's campaign lay uncoffined in their shallow, narrow graves, with only a stick at the head of the mound to mark their last resting place.

CHAPTER XVI.

A MAN AND A MAID.

There was a girl visiting in Fauquier in those stirring days who was a heroine in the truest acceptation of the term. She was fine looking, and as she was pointed out to me, cantering her horse through the deserted streets of Paris, a little village lying under the shadow of the Blue Ridge Mountains, I thought her the most striking figure my eyes ever rested upon. I came to know her well afterwards, and she was as gentle, refined and tender of heart as a woman could be, though she looked like the Queen of the Amazons, whose chosen sphere was the battlefield and not the boudoir. She was called by the soldiers Lady Di Vernon, after Scott's heroine, because of her splendid horsemanship and her dexterity with firearms.

Miss Hallie Hume's home was just across the Rappahannock River, but she spent at least half of her time with her cousin, Annie Moore, who, with her mother and aged grandfather and her little brother Jack, a lad of some ten years, were all alone in their home, her father, a captain in Pickett's Brigade, having been killed at the battle of Manassas, and her eldest brother was a trooper in Fitz Lee's cavalry.

In the winter of 1863 Mosby's partisans had been so bold and aggressive in their operations that the Federal General Kilpatrick determined to either kill, capture or drive the command out of the country. For this purpose he ordered General Merritt with his brigade to start Christmas eve from Warrenton Junction, and to sweep through Fauquier County like a whirlwind, searching as he went every mansion.

Merritt had orders to divide his brigade into detachments, each to act in its allotted sphere, and the villages, especially Upperville, Paris, Orleans and the Plains, were to be thoroughly cleared out. The command was to rendezvous at Thoroughfare Gap. It was a well-conceived plan. With such a large force, amounting to at least four thousand troopers, it looked as if success were certain, and Kilpatrick, like Fighting Joe Hooker before Chancellorsville, lost his caution, and the cavalry leader boasted to his staff that he was sure of bagging Mosby and his partisans.

Now, it happened that Hallie Hume had slipped into Warrenton through the pickets, and one of the town girls told her that a staff officer of Kilpatrick's had repeated to her his chief's boast. In five minutes Hallie was on her horse and headed for the open. This time the pickets saw her and gave her a run; but they might as well have chased a deer. Hallie reached the Moore homestead, and a signal from the window brought a partisan, to whom Hattie communicated the sum and substance of her tale.

The day after New Year a fagged out, tired and wearied body of men reached Thoroughfare Gap. Their trip had been emphatically a water haul. It is said that Kilpatrick's language was simply sulphurous, and he was noted as being one of the hardest swearers in the Army of the Potomac. Yet, if he did but know it, he alone had been the cause of the military contretemps! Had he but followed the old adage, "Speech is silver, but silence is golden," Merritt might have bagged a few rough riders here and there, and Kilpatrick might have kept his temper.

It was a matter of great surprise to the Federal officers who sought to capture the partisans that they managed to get warning; in fact, it was a profound mystery to them how their best laid plans, faultless in conception, and promptly carried out, should have proved so barren of results. They could not conceive that the girls they visited, soft, sweet and gentle, the incarnation of languid grace, could, in a second, become quick, bold and resolute, ready night and day to plunge into dangers and undergo hardships that would daunt a veteran, and it was almost unbelievable that these soft-spoken, laughter-loving maidens were as quick to gather army news and had the wit to transmit valuable military items to their friends as the redoubtable Madame Du Farge herself.

When a company of the Eighth Illinois Cavalry, a few months later, surrounded Mrs. Moore's house at the dawn of day, and the officer in charge had given

strict orders that no one should leave the house under penalty of being shot, would he not be in a bitter state of mind to find that he himself had revoked his own order, and thereby failed to make a coup that would have brought him a handsome notice in "General Orders," and certain promotion? Yet so it was, and this is the way it happened:

Hattie Moore whispered to her mother that if the Federals should reach the house to keep them there as long as possible; that there was a squad of Rangers at Mr. Knight's house not over a mile away, and she wanted to warn them to escape. She also had a few earnest words to say to Ike.

The captain and the lieutenant of the Federals were, in the meantime, pacing back and forth in the passage. The bulk of the company were guarding the outside, and so close were the sentinels together that a cat could not have slipped through the patrol unperceived. From the floor above came the noise of moving furniture, which showed the searching party at work. Miss Hattie approached the two officers and said that if they would come up to the dining-room she would give them a hot cup of coffee. They assented eagerly, but said they were in a great hurry and would like to have it as soon as possible. She answered that she would go down to the kitchen and hurry up the cook. In a few minutes she came back, looking mad all over, and told the officers that her little brother started for the spring a few rods away to get water for the coffee, when he

was stopped by the sentry; and then the gentle-looking, guileless Ike entered the room carrying a tin pail. The captain summoned his orderly and told him to say to the guard to let the child go to the spring; so out of the room marched Ike, as brave as you please. His sister, when he was well out of the room, whispered to the lad to slip off unperceived, if he could, and run over to the Knights' place, about a mile away, and warn the soldiers to take to the woods. The boy nodded his head, and as he passed to the spring he set his wits working. He brought one pailful and gave it to his sister, and whistling for his dog started again for the spring.

Now, Ike was of that round-faced, blue-eyed type of boy who looked like a cherub, but he had the cunning of the street Arab. He would have given his little life for his country. His father, who fell dead, sword in hand, on the crest of Cemetery Heights at Gettysburg, was to him a glorious martyr; and his brother was a rough rider of the Black Horse, a regular Paladin, and Ike felt a glow of pride, and not the shadow of a fear, when it was up to him to do something for the Confederacy.

He had gotten near the spring, when he yelled to the guard: "There's a rabbit! there's a rabbit! sic 'em, sic 'em, Mose!" And away went the boy and dog, down through the coppice that lead to the woods. Once out of the guard's sight Ike laid a bee-line for the Knights'. Panting and breathless, he reached the

house, entered the kitchen, then made his way to the passage, and as soon as he could get his breath his childish treble rang out in the old familiar cry, "Run! Run! the Yankees are coming!"

There were four of Mosby's men sitting with their hostess at breakfast, but in a second their chairs were vacant, and they had sped to the woods. Ike also disappeared! he and Mose made their way home, reaching there just as the detachment of cavalry was ready to move.

"Sonny," said the sergeant, "did you catch that rabbit?"

Without batting an eyelid, Ike replied: "No, sir, he got away." But he was thinking of the soldiers who were eating breakfast at Mrs. Knight's, when his yell sent them skedaddling.

Ten minutes later, when the Yankees surrounded the Knight mansion, they found a placid old lady sitting in the dining-room knitting. The man-hunt that ensued yielded nothing.

One of the bravest men I ever met in Mosby's Confederacy was Julien Robinson of Company D of the Rangers, from King William County, Va., and the most glorious woman was Miss Hallie Hume. I never think of one without the other, for they were (as the slang goes) regular "pals," and she saved Julien from certain death, for he had sworn that he would never again be taken prisoner. That there was an understanding between them, I always believed, but, alas!

the failure of the Confederacy shattered many a dream and knocked many a plan sky high. The last I saw of Julien was just after the war, when he paid me a visit at Alexandria, en route to the far West, to make or mar his fortune. And the shades of Diana! The daring, dashing Hallie, the child of the revolution, the typical daughter of Virginia's stormy period, the girl who laughed at danger, the maiden of quick wit and ready action, the woman to adorn the salon, married a Methodist preacher! Another instance of extremes meeting!

Julien I knew intimately as one comrade could know another, and was with him in prison and out, in sunshine and in storm. It was in the winter of 1864; I had escaped from the Old Capital Prison, and while trying to get across the Potomac near Harper's Ferry in disguise was recaptured, carried to the ferry and handcuffed, and while there Julien Robinson was brought in, and we two remained in that hole until we were sent to the penitentiary at Wheeling, West Virginia. We remained there only two days, and then we were started for Bridgeport, across the Ohio River, to take the cars for Columbus, where the military prison, called Camp Chase, was located. We both well knew that if those prison gates closed upon us we were prisoners until the end of the war, and we both preferred death to a hopeless captivity. We had some greenbacks hidden in our clothing. We purchased a blue army overcoat apiece from the Union prisoners,



MISS HALLIE HUME,
From an old tin-type.



and in the dim morning light we escaped the guard, made a rush through the city, and gained the refuge of the mountains. We traded with a farmer our warm, comfortable overcoats for old suits of homespun that might, within the memory of man, have passed muster without a remark. I was the best dressed of the lot, for my coat was a sack, but Julien's had tails as long as a peacock's. I used to sit down in the snow and weep when I looked at him. Oh! he was a sight! And yet there was no greater dandy in Company Darling, as the Fauquier girls christened Company D. The clothes were no infliction in the solitude of the forest, but when we were obliged by hunger and fatigue to travel along the railroad, and pass through hamlets and villages, then the fun began. We made such a sight as to cause the young children to stare, the boys to jeer, the girls to giggle, the men to laugh, and not a few women to cry. It was like the Old Mother Goose's couplet:

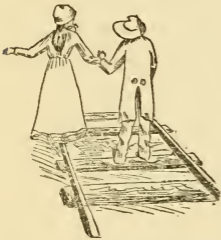
"Hark! hark! the dogs do bark,
The beggars have come to town."

It was the month of January, and the country was covered with snow. Most of the time we slept out in the open, with a fire to keep us from freezing, for the Cheat River region is very sparsely settled. We begged or bought food from the railroad section hands. Yet in all those terrible hardships we suffered, half-frozen, footsore and weary, ever haunted by the fear

of recapture, the grit and nerve of that splendid lad never weakened; he was of the type, in the words of the old saying, "that with a frolic welcome took the sunshine and the storm."

We were in the midst of a hostile population, and played the role of two boys going to Martinsburg to find work.

There is an oasis in every desert, and one glorious rest, with "vittels and drink," and as Mickey Free has it, "the run of the house," we would start on refreshed.



Julien had a weakness for every pretty girl he met, and one day as we were walking along the railroad track we overtook a comely mountain lass. I passed on, but Julien stopped, and soon that winning tongue of his found favor with the maiden.

It could not have been his personal appearance, for he had not combed his hair for a week, and one of the tails of his butternut coat had caught fire and burned off in front; but what of that! Shakespeare says:

"He who has a tongue, I hold him no man,
If with that tongue he cannot win a woman."

I sat on a rail smoking my briar-root, waiting for the interview to end, and after what appeared to me an

unconscionable length of time Julien came up. "Now listen, and follow carefully," he said. "I told her we were on the way to Cumberland to enlist, and she has a brother belonging to the 15th Union Infantry, stationed there, and we are going to join his company. She has invited us to stay all night at her house, so come on."

We followed the damsel up the mountain side, and came to a neat house of brown logs. She entered and introduced us to her father and mother as recruits who were going to join "Buddie's" company. The old couple gave us a simple hearty welcome, and that night we sat down to a meal that lingers in my memory yet. Fried bacon, corn pone, hot cakes and maple syrup, and some sure-enough coffee. Shades of Epicurus! How we did eat! Such a meal after prison fare and beggars' scraps was not only pleasant, it was ecstatic!

That night, sitting around a log fire, Julien told our tale, and his fertile imagination was equal to the occasion. We were brothers, he told them, and lived in Morgan County, W. Va. Our father was dead many years, and our mother married again, and our stepfather nearly worked us to death; he refused to let us enlist to fight to save the Union, but at last our hearts nearly bursting (Julien said "bustin' ") with love for the old flag, we ran away.

I left all the talking to Julien, for I was not, as Mark Twain expressed it, a cheerful liar.

Finally the old people got to talking, and it was all

about their son in the army. The tales he had told his parents of his soldier experiences made Julien hang his head. This mountain hero in blue would have hung Jeff Davis on a sour apple tree, left to himself. Killing a half-dozen Rebs before breakfast was hardly any more to him than taking a matutinal cocktail. And this old couple believed every word! Julien asked Martie, the girl, if she had ever seen any Rebels. She said that a carload of prisoners had passed the station on its way to Camp Chase, and she had got a good look at them, and "they were all mean-looking critters."

Oh, it was a halcyon time! Julien making love to the girl, I eating, sleeping and drinking hard cider. We stayed there a week, and might have remained during the war. The first principle of military strategy is to forage on your enemy, and we had no compunctions of conscience, at least I did not, but Julien must have had, for they gave him a respectable suit of clothes and pitched the long-tailed coat in the fire.

One morning the girl came from the postoffice in a state of wild elation. She had received a letter from "Buddie," who would visit home the next day on a furlough. Martie's delight that we should meet her brother was refreshing, and she and the old folks were mutually happy. The old man harnessed up his spring wagon, to go down to the grocery store at the station, to get things for the dinner next day, which was to be a regular lovefeast.

Julien and myself retired for consultation. I said: "If that fire-eating, Reb-killing son-of-a-gun comes here, I'm going to light out." Julien said: "I'm with you; I hate to leave Martie, but my State needs me." Then he commenced singing:

"Over the hills and far away—"

So, late that night, when the household was buried in sleep, we slipped out and went to the station, caught the midnight train, and stole a ride of over a dozen miles before we were discovered and ordered off by the brakeman.

Some pictures of surpassing interest, tense with feeling, vivid in color, are photographed on one's brain. Probably no American prisoner ever forgot the sensational picture when he thrust his hand in the bag to draw the white or black bean in accordance with the devilish order of Santa Anna. And I often recall Julien Robinson's face when he rattled the dice with death in the stockade at Sir John's Run.

We were recaptured at Berkley Springs, W. Va., a few days after our midnight flitting, and placed in the Yankee guardhouse, situated on the banks of the Potomac River, which consisted of railroad ties placed upright in a circle, roofed with a tent cloth, making the room, which was about ten feet in diameter, very comfortable. It had a big fireplace of logs chinked with

clay, the broad chimney was some seven or eight feet high, and was built right on the brink of the river.

In us that night hope was dead, for we knew that on tomorrow we would be sent to Camp Chase under a heavy guard. In vain we had played the role of simple country yokels; in vain we had sought every means in our power to postpone the inevitable; it was of no use. Unless we would take the oath of allegiance we would be immured in Camp Chase. Both Julien and myself had solemnly sworn never to go to that prison alive.

Inside the stockade were two sleeping shelves about the size of a Pullman berth. A sentinel stood within the room, near the door, with loaded gun and fixed bayonet watching us. We had drawn straws as to which of us should make the first essay; Julien had won. Whether the sentinel would bayonet him as he climbed, or stand outside and shoot his head off as he emerged from the chimney, or whether he would be burned alive, Julien did not know.

It was near midnight; we had built a roaring fire, but an armful of brushwood had nearly smothered it. I pressed Julien's hand. "Now!" I said, "now!" Our eyes met in a long look, and his face was like marble; his eyes glittered, his resolute jaw was closed tight; there was no sign of fear or flinching; he was the personification of clean, clear grit. He convulsively pressed my hand, and jumped into the smoldering flame.



Julien was neither stabbed, shot, nor burned. The sentinel, a young fellow, lost his nerve and ran from the guard-house. In the meantime, Robinson had climbed the chimney, rolled off, and gone his way up the railroad track unmolested.

Now see the result of a brave bearing and a winning tongue. If we had been captured, in our run-down condition, we would have lifelessly submitted to our fate; but a woman took him in—come to think of it, he also took her in; and logically speaking, they both took each other in, and I, like Iago, could exclaim: “Whether Roderigo kill Cassio, or Cassio him, or each do kill the other, every way makes my gain.”

CHAPTER XVII.

THE STRANGEST WEDDING IN VIRGINIA.

The only wedding I ever witnessed in the Debatable Land was a remarkable one, and I doubt if the like of it ever occurred on the North American Continent. It is the favorite denouement of the novelist and the playwright to interrupt the nuptials just as the bride is about to utter the fateful words; but in real life it is as rare as a thunderbolt from a clear sky. When a plain farmhouse is changed into a temple of Hymen, where the tyer of the nuptial knot was blind, where the groom's attire was a faded gray jacket and dilapidated breeches, and the bride's costume was a dress of her mother's, where the groomsmen had spurs on their heels, and revolvers in their belts, where the mother gave the bride away, though there was no marriage license, and the orchestra consisted of two fiddles, and where the groom, within three hours, is torn from the arms of his bride, and the two groomsmen die with their boots on shortly after the minister has pronounced the benediction—such a wedding is unique, to say the least. It happened this way:

About six weeks after our dash within the enemy's lines, Thorn received an invitation by the grapevine



"The Loving Couple Simply Stood Up."

telegraph to attend the wedding of one of General Bev. Robinson's scouts, who was to be married to Miss Wright of Fairfax County. He was also requested to procure two darkey fiddlers from Fauquier County.

Now, this "grapevine telegraph," as it was called in Mosby's Confederacy, was more mysterious in its workings than Marconi's system. In a section where there was no telegraph, no postoffice, no special delivery, and no social visiting, the news was disseminated by the grapevine route; and it is astonishing how fast important messages were conveyed free of charge.

The next day Thorn and myself started for Mrs. Wright's home, which was situated in Fairfax County, near Accotink Creek, and almost in sight of a Federal cavalry division.

We reached the small frame house about dusk, and hiding our horses in the pines we approached the house on foot. Thorn remarked at the time that it was a perfect trap, enclosed as it was by a picket fence.

We found all the company assembled: about a dozen girls, the expectant groom, and four or five Confederate soldiers. I have forgotten the name of the groom, but he was a fine, manly fellow, about twenty-one or twenty-two. The minister sat in the scantily-furnished parlor, surrounded by the guests. No license was needed in those days, as there was no court or county officials. The Man of God was very old, and totally blind. There were no preliminaries; the loving couple simply stood up.

In this instance the groom wore the only suit of clothes he possessed, a tattered gray uniform. The bride, a pretty little brunette, was robed in her mother's wedding dress, and presented a striking contrast to her future lord and master, like that of a dainty butterfly wedding a drab-colored beetle.

The ceremony was by word of mouth, and soon over. We shook hands with the groom and kissed the bride, then went to the frugal supper. Afterwards the dining-room was cleared and preparations made for the dance.

During all these proceedings I noticed that Thorn was very uneasy. His eyes were constantly roving around, and his ears cocked as it were, not so much to listen to the words within, but to hear the sounds outside. While in conversation with the hostess he signaled to me to follow him outside.

"We had better leave here at once," he said; "Mrs. Wright told me that the negro girl who cooked for her left yesterday, and she doesn't know where she has gone."

I advised him to call out the other soldiers and tell them. This he did, but to a man they laughed at his fears, saying that the house was way back from the road, and that they would put a picket out, so that in the improbable event of the Yankees coming they would have plenty of time to get away. I agreed with them, for I longed to spend the evening with those pretty girls "tripping the light fantastic toe," but Thorn was obdurate. The other soldiers twitted Thorn with be-

ing an old married man, while they were young and in for a lark, and intended to have it.

The two dusky fiddlers were over three-score, and had played together for more than forty years; they did not know one note from another, but in the words of the rhymster,

“They never played a tune that was slow,
And perfectly hated an adagio,
But with nodding head, and time beating toe
And elbows squared, and the resinous bow
Not going up high, or coming down low,
But sawed right through in the middle;
They played by rule of the ancient school
On the old Virginia nigger fiddle.”

They tuned their instruments and started the “Devil’s Dream.” The soldiers hurried back and selected their partners. We danced one soul-stirring quadrille, and when it was ended Thorn started for the woods, and I unwillingly followed him. We led our horses into a dense pine thicket about a hundred yards from the house, and unstrapping our blankets lay down and soon dropped asleep.

It was a moonless night, and the sky was ablaze with stars, but where we were lying in the covert it was dark as Erebus. We were sleeping side by side, “spoon fashion,” as the soldiers used to say, when suddenly Thorn sprang up, and instantly I did the same.

"What is it?" I asked.

"The devil's to pay over yonder, that's what's the matter. Strap up and follow me, and lead your horse."

In a minute, trained as we were for sudden alarms, our horses were bridled and bitted. Thorn led the way and holding his horse's tail I followed. In a short while we struck a small road. "Mount!" said Thorn, "and keep close up." We had gone several miles before he halted, then finding cover we made our soldiers' beds, and as we lay there Thorn told me he had been awakened by the jar of the ground, and heard several pistol shots. "The Yankees have made a rush, and I'll bet they have scooped the whole crowd," said he.

The next morning we went to a nearby farmhouse, where we fed our horses and got breakfast. The only inmates of the house were an old man and woman, who seemed to take no interest in anything except religion. They asked Thorn and me if we were children of God; and on being informed that we did not so consider ourselves, the old fellow launched out in a fervid discourse, intended to make us pause in our reckless careers.

We made our way to a high hill some distance off, and from the summit we could see the country for miles around. I gave one glance towards Wright's house, then turned and grasped Thorn's hand with feeling too deep for words. The house was surrounded by Federal cavalry raiders; it seemed as if a whole regiment was on the move.

We remained lying idle the whole day. When even-

ing came Thorn said: "We will mount now and find out what was the upshot of last night."

"Why!" I answered, "the Yankee camps are buzzing like a hive of bees; they will gobble us up, certain."

"No," said he, "they have scouted and searched the country for miles, and cleaned out everything."

"All right," I responded, "lead on, you certainly are the greatest combination of prudence and rashness I ever met with."

Thorn grinned at the compliment. We went at a fast gait, and when near the house we dismounted, tied our horses and cautiously stole along to the house. With cocked revolvers in hand, we reconnoitered the buildings; all was dark except the gleam of a candle upstairs. Going to a window, Thorn tapped on the pane; immediately the casement upstairs was cautiously opened, and Mrs. Wright asked who we were. We gave our names, and she and her daughter came to the door and let us in.

I have seen many crushed and broken women during the war, but neither before nor since have I ever beheld such a remorseful, sorrowing, grief-stricken pair as that mother and daughter. It was some time before we could get anything coherent out of them. The mother simply rocked herself to and fro, ejaculating, "My God! My God!" and the daughter wailed, "I wish I was dead! I wish I was dead! Oh, I wish I was dead!"

Finally Mrs. Wright pulled herself together and

told of the bitter ending to a happy evening. It reminded me forcibly of the immortal lines of Childe Harold:

“Since upon night so sweet, such awful morn
could rise.”

About an hour after midnight, according to Mrs. Wright, the fiddlers declared they were played out, and that the dance must end; so as a “wind-up” the Virginia reel was in full swing. The picket, thinking all danger was over, left his post and came to join in the dance. The hostess was sitting facing the parlor, when suddenly the door was flung open and a Yankee officer, followed by a crowd of his men, rushed into the room. They all had revolvers in their hands. The officer ordered the men to surrender. Most of the scouts were too greatly surprised to move, and seeing that resistance was useless threw up their hands. But two of them, however, Richardson and Clarke, were near the kitchen door, and in a second had darted through it and made for the woods. There was a fusilade of pistol shots outside, but none were fired in the house. The groom tried to get out through the window, but his newly wedded wife, who was dancing with him, threw her arms around his neck and held him tight. The Yankees then searched the house, but found nobody concealed.

After a few minutes another officer came in and reported that both Richardson and Clarke had been shot

while climbing the fence, for the Yankees, it seemed, had surrounded the house. The two wounded Confederates were hurried to the Yankee camp, where a surgeon attended them, but word came the next morning that they both died shortly after reaching camp, for they had been shot in many places. Their bodies were carried to Alexandria and buried in the graveyard there. All day the Yankees patrolled the country and searched the houses around, but no other prisoners were taken. "And to think," she wailed, rocking herself, and weeping, "but for this wedding those two poor boys would be alive instead of lying cold in death." And the girl, like Scott's heroine, "wedded wife and widowed maid," with her wan cheeks and staring eyes, kept repeating: "I wish I was dead! I shall see him no more—no more! I wish I was dead!"

And the groom, torn away from the arms of his virgin bride, with her tear-drops staining his face, her agonized kiss wet on his lips; the sound of her wailing sobs lingering in his ears—what must have been his feelings, and with what dogged despair and enforced resignation he must have watched the long days come and go while a prisoner at Point Lookout. Verily a honeymoon in that prison without his bride—half-starved, guarded by negro soldiers—must have been an experience that few men in this Republic have ever undergone. One year and two months from the wedding dance to the bridal chamber, would try any man's patience.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW THE WOMEN LOVED THE SOUTH.

Many instances came under my observation of the intense love for the Southern cause entertained by the women of the South, a love that seemed to rise above that of all other ties.

About a week after the party I saw Miss Sue Guttridge at her home, and she told me that she had been inside the enemy's lines to Fairfax Court House, and that there was a fine chance for a couple of scouts to capture horses and prisoners, that the Union cavalry had gone into winter quarters and the troopers were passing back and forth between Falls Church and Fairfax in small parties, and that the discipline was very lax.

There is an old saying that "a wink is as good as a nod to a blind man," and when I left Miss Sue I had my mind made up to get within the Federal lines; and I also decided that there was one man who could make the trip with me, and that man was Billy Thorn of the Black Horse Cavalry.

Before the war Billy had been the County Surveyor, and was the most noted wild turkey hunter in all the Piedmont region. In woodcraft he was unequaled, and

his knowledge of the country was perfect. As for myself, if I strayed away from the main road, I was sure to get hopelessly lost.

I had but small hope that Thorn would care for such uncalled for and such fearful risk, for he was on furlough, and worse than all, he was a married man with a wife and two young children.

I started for Thorn's house, about ten miles distant, and reached there late in the evening and received a comrade's warm welcome. When I spoke of the raid, Thorn dismissed it as being impracticable. I told him what Miss Sue had said, and urged him to accompany me. He said he had been in every battle in the past year, and that just now he wanted a little peace and a quiet time to spend with his wife and babies. We talked the subject over before a large fire, and his girlish wife, a lovely woman, asked me many questions. I saw that Thorn had made up his mind not to go, and his last words to me before retiring were, that if we go and got within the enemy's lines we would in all probability never get out.

I went to bed feeling certain that the trip was abandoned. Of course, there were plenty of the Black Horsemen who would volunteer to go, but none of them had Thorn's consummate knowledge of woodcraft, and in this case it was not reckless bravery, but cool judgment and a thorough knowledge of the country that was required to insure success. To my great surprise, Thorn told me at breakfast the next morning

that he was going with me, neck or nothing, and we would start at once.

I did not witness the parting between Thorn and his family, and we had walked some miles before he volunteered to clear up the mystery: "It was my wife who made me go," he said, "and she told me, much as she cared for me, she could not bear to have me hanging around home when I might be able to do some harm to the foe. Curious creatures, women!"

Before the day was over I saw another proof of woman's unselfish love, only it was a case of misplaced affection this time.

It was late in the forenoon, and we were traveling on foot along an unused country road, Thorn leading, with his Sharpe's carbine in his right hand, while I was trotting behind with a Colt's in my belt and a double-barrel shot gun on my shoulder, when Thorn suddenly gave a jump like a startled horse, and sprinted down the road with me close at his heels. In about a minute we reached a little cabin standing on the side of the road. I then witnessed a scene such as I never beheld before nor since: On the ground lay a woman screaming, while a hulking, middle-aged man stood over her, kicking her and cursing vilely. We were within a dozen feet of the pair, but they were unaware of our presence. Never, even in the mad rush of battle, did I feel such a wild longing to kill as I did at that moment. I threw up my gun, which had twenty buckshot in each barrel,

sighted the bead at the brute's head, and pulled trigger. Thorn saw the action and struck the gun upward with his hand. The piece exploded with a stunning report, and the buckshot tore through a tree. Then, what a transformation! The red-faced, truculent scoundrel was changed into a white-faced, abject wretch; the woman, with the same tears running down her cheeks, was pleading with us to spare him. He was her husband, and was not a soldier. He may have been one of the "Buttermilk Rangers." Thorn and myself gladly gave ourselves a day's labor to dispatch this wife-beater to our provost-marshal across the Rappahannock, with the request to put him in some infantry regiment. Both I and my comrade, when we bade him good-bye, expressed the hope that he might stop some good Union bullet with his head in his first engagement.

When we reached Fairfax County, close to the enemy's line, we visited the homes of people who had not seen an armed Confederate soldier for more than a year. The sight of the ragged gray uniforms invariably brought tears to the women's eyes; and it was pathetic to see them bring their little children to kiss us because we were Southern soldiers. These people risked their homes and their liberty in aiding us, but they did it joyously and proudly.

We crossed the Union picket line, on the old Orange and Alexandria Railroad, a little after midnight. There were infantry guards patrolling the roadbed, but snake

fashion we wriggled across and made our way safely to the Arundel House, a few miles distant. This family and estate are worthy of a place in song and story.

Old man Arundel, his wife and three daughters, the oldest then not yet twenty years old, were all born and reared in Fairfax, and were devoted to the South, but as they had lived within the enemy's lines for two years and entertained Union officers and soldiers, common report made them traitors to the soil.

On the way Thorn cautioned me to say nothing, and never to speak of having stopped at the Arundel's; "for," said he, "they are held by the enemy as 'truly loyal' and they help us more than any company of soldiers. They have smuggled a great quantity of quinine and gun caps, and are in direct communication with Jeb Stuart, and report all the movements of the troops to him."

We reached the house before dawn, and it was dark and silent. Thorn went to a certain window, and stooping gathered a handful of earth and threw it against the casement on the ground floor. In a moment or two the window was slightly raised and a woman's voice was heard in whisper. Thorn replied, and while I stood guard at the front he was in consultation with them for fully a half-hour. When he rejoined me he



had a haversack well-stuffed with provisions, and had gained all the information he needed.

Thorn told me that the girls had offered to get up a party and invite all the Federal officers so that we could have our pick of their steeds; but the Arundels were bound to be arrested, and would probably be sent to the Old Capital; in any case their usefulness would be destroyed. He thought our best chance was to flank the pickets on their right. We determined to pass the rest of the day close by. Fortunately for us there were patches of pine coppice, and in one of these we lay hid until night, then we saw by the glare of the Union campfires that we would have to be very careful.

After two days of patient waiting on the highway between Fairfax Court House and Falls Church we captured three cavalymen of the Eighth Illinois Cavalry. The alarm was given and a detachment chased us like a pack of hounds on the trail of a fox, and for ten miles the run continued and was ended only when darkness closed in.

Thoroughly worn out, we stopped at a farmhouse, where we received a warm welcome. We sat down to a hot meal of camp beef, potatoes, roast pumpkins and real coffee. What a supper we had after our rattling ride! The three prisoners belonged to Company L of the crack cavalry regiment of the Army of the Potomac. The youngest, who rode behind me, was about my own age, still in his minority; the next older was

about a year his senior, and McCaughery, the only real soldier of the lot, was about twenty-five, and according to his own account had had many ups and downs in the world, "but this capture," he said, "was the dad derndest luck of all. If you fellows had dropped out of the sky I wouldn't have been more surprised."

"Yes," broke in another, "right in sight of our camp, too."

"Wonder what our boys think!" added the third prisoner.

After supper my comrade, the prisoners and myself went into the parlor and had a long smoke together.

In all my army experiences, when Yank and Reb met, the first thing they did was to fill their pipes, and unconsciously they emulated the Indians; which goes to show that "Poor Lo" was in some respects a philosopher and a gentleman.

No one who saw those five men talking kindly and amicably together would have guessed that a few hours before they were mortal enemies. To see them now, the forefingers of the two Rebel scouts poking the ribs of the blue-bloused cavalrymen to illustrate the point of some joke, one would have thought them old friends. It was hard to realize that but for three hours before the sportive fingers of the scouts had rested on the fateful trigger ready to send the soul of the Bluecoat to Eternity.

After an hour's smoking and talking, prisoners and captors alike began to nod. The exciting, thrilling



"A lighted candle, a chair upon which sat the girl."

hours, the full meal and the sedative pipe were too much, and I caught myself losing consciousness several times. This would never do! Thorn, who was of more seasoned stuff, told me to go to the kitchen and consult with the girls as to what should be done. I soon perceived that the youngest had the brains of the family, and when I explained to her that both my comrade and myself were utterly broken down with our four days and nights of nervous strain, and that we must either let the prisoners go or be captured ourselves, the eyes of the girls fairly snapped fire.

"It would be a shame and disgrace for you to do either," said the younger. "Now you take the prisoners upstairs and put them in the room. You two lie in the passage and I will keep guard beside you, while my two sisters will keep watch outside." She led the way upstairs. We placed the prisoners in a top room, which contained one large bed. We bade them good-night, and warned them that they had better go to sleep and make no attempt to escape as it would be dangerous. We then closed the door and lay down fully dressed, with our revolvers beside us.

The scene remains in my memory to this day. The narrow passage—the table at one end, with a lighted candle; a chair near the door upon which sat the girl, her cold, set face and her gleaming eyes. We felt that watch and ward would be faithfully kept by her. We were soon sound asleep.

It was nearly dawn when we were aroused by a light

touch, and in a second we were awake and alert with our revolvers in our hands.

It is curious to note how the senses can be trained. The average man, in days of peace, when aroused from deep slumber, takes some time to regain his normal faculties. His dreams are mixed with the reality; his wandering spirit must be recalled to its earthly tabernacle; the cobwebs must be swept from his brain, and the heavy eyes rubbed to clear the vision. But in the case of a scout, who is often suddenly awakened, and whose life depends on his promptitude, all is changed. He may be sunk in sleep deep and profound, his sixth sense comes to his aid; he meets every emergency. The prone figure, with muscles relaxed and with measured breathing, lying useless and inert, is by a touch changed as quickly as the lightning's flash into a nervous steel-muscled, open-eyed, clear-brained being, ready for instant action.

The girl with finger to her lips pointed to the door. We heard a movement within, and Thorn, with a revolver in one hand and the candle in the other, entered the room with me at his heels.

The prisoners were in their bed and seemingly asleep. We looked around and silently withdrew, closing the door softly behind us, and returned to our blankets, feeling well-assured that after the exhibition of wakefulness on our part they would not try again to escape.

It was broad day when we were again aroused, and

we went in and ordered the Bluecoats to get ready, and in a few minutes we were all at the breakfast table. The prisoners and captors were fresh and rested, but the girls looked wan and hollow-eyed, yet the bright smiles on their faces showed that their hearts were glad. The thought that their house had been used for what our friends the enemy would call "a guerrilla den," which, if found out, would result probably in its destruction, did not occur to them, or if it did, they were so proud of having safely guarded three Yankee cavalymen that every other feeling was absorbed.

We learned that we were outside the enemy's lines, and had nothing to fear except the chance of meeting some scouting party.

We presented the girls with the arms captured from the prisoners as a memento of the vigil.

After we had delivered the prisoners to the provost-marshal at Orange Court House, I asked McCaughery, the eldest, why he made no attempt to escape that night, knowing that we were too tired and wornout to prevent them?

He answered that he and his two companions had all their plans made to make a rope of their bedclothes with which to slide to the ground, but just as they set about their work they heard us move, and had barely time to throw themselves in bed and counterfeit sleep.

When I told him that the girls had kept guard, and it was owing to them that they were still prisoners, he

ripped out an oath, and said: "When the *women* of the South turn soldiers, it is time for me and my friends to quit."

I wrote down the names of these three heroines, and it is a matter of keenest regret to me that I lost those notes.

CHAPTER XIX.

MRS. TAYLOR SCOTT.



My first visit to Welby, the home of Mrs. Taylor Scott, was not made in cavalier fashion; instead, I appeared there like a fugitive from justice and as if a price had been set on my head, and I felt mean enough to have sold myself for a Confederate one-dollar note. It happened thus:

One bright morning in the winter of '64 I set out from lower Fauquier for Salem, a little village in the upper part of the county, where the Black Horse troops, detached from the regular army, had made their rendezvous for the winter.

I was mounted on a horse; at least it was called a horse, and bore some resemblance to that animal, for it walked on four legs and had a tail. At some remote period it might have been a decent plough horse. It was given me by a citizen who found it on the road, where it had been left by a Federal raiding party, to feed the buzzards probably. This old crowbait was nearly blind, ringboned, had the staggers, and a cough

that could be heard a mile away. I rode instead of walking, because I wanted him to carry my saddle and equipments. I was riding through the sylvan solitude of the open woods, with malice toward none and charity for all, except that son-of-a-jail-bird who stole my fine horse, and my soul at peace with the world, indulging in those sweet images invoked by a briar-root loaded with that noble brand of tobacco called the "Soldier's Comfort." Ambling along on my noble steed, my mind steeped in day dreams, one leg thrown across the pommel of the saddle, I came to a sharp turn of the road and saw a column of Federal cavalry not over a hundred yards away. Like Marmion, I turned and "dashed the rowels into my steed." There was a dense pine wood a short distance away, and I thought if I could but gain that I would be safe. *If I could!* Ah, that was the rub! The old horse, awakened from his dreams by the sting of the spurs, started his bones down the road.

The Bluecoats saw me, gave a "view halloa," and put their horses to a run, certain of their quarry. I beat a devil's tattoo on the gridiron sides of my Flying Childers, and he hobbled down the road as though he were hauling an ox-cart.

The Federals let loose their revolvers at every jump, and the bullets whistled around me. I bent double and tried to repeat the Lord's prayer; but I was so scared that I could remember only the childish petition, "Now I lay me down to sleep."

None of the bullets touched me, for nothing but my legs could be seen, and it is difficult to aim straight when on the run. My pursuers, in all probability, were laughing at the spectacle I presented: my limbs were in furious motion, and the spasmodic actions of "the old hoss" was comical enough; my hat had blown off, and one of my spurs had gone so deep that it stuck in the animal's ribs, and remained there, sticking in his side. I would never have reached the friendly pines but for a ball which struck my horse somewhere in the rear and caused him to stop his up-and-down gait and lengthen his stride; his hoofs, about the size of a prize pumpkin at a county fair, now struck the frozen road with such resounding whacks that they deadened the noise of the pursuit. It was a close call, for when I reached the edge of the dense pine covert the foremost cavalryman was not ten feet away. I did not draw rein, but slid off the horse, and was in the friendly shelter in a second; then I did some tall running. No old hare chased by dogs and shot at by sportsmen ever made a finer sprint. After I had run myself out of breath I dropped down behind a log, incapable of further motion.

About an hour before sunset I resumed my journey. To what place? I knew not, for I had lost all sense of locality; my meditations were rather gloomy, and ran something like this: "Here am I, a citizen of Virginia, pursuing my harmless way through the midst of a sylvan solitude, when I am set upon by a lot of blood-thirsty fellows, who take my horse—" Here my reflections

came to an end, and I burst out laughing as I thought of what they were likely to do with that quadruped. They could not dispose of him as there was no bone factory around; and when I come to think of it, bones of all kinds were a drug on the market in Mosby's Confederacy. What made me feel blue was not anxiety for the horse, but what he carried. Items: one fine McClellan saddle, a carbine, India rubber cape that was rolled around some clothes. It was a small inventory, but taking into consideration that it was all the goods I possessed in the world, it was no small loss.

I kept on until I came to a blind road, which I followed, and finally came to a spacious house. I knocked at the door, and it was opened by a lovely matron in the golden prime of youth; strikingly graceful. She was one of the few people with a manner, such as Madame De Stael describes, "*Je ne sais quoi*"—a woman whose individuality was so strong that it impressed her being on the tablets of one's memory. She stared at the bareheaded, tattered boy, whose face had been scratched and his clothes rent and torn in the mad rush through brake, swamp and brier.

When I had told my tale and convinced her of my identity she gave me the warmest welcome. Her name was Mrs. Scott, wife of Major Taylor Scott, who was stationed at Charleston, S. C. I thought at the time that my hostess was one of the gentlest women I had ever met, and it was a revelation, when a short time after, one of her family told me of an incident which,

for magnificent courage, has never been surpassed. The maids of Saragossa are extolled in history; the women of Carthage have been the theme of song and story, but this retiring, gentle-voiced lady did more, dared more and accomplished more than any one of them.

Mrs. Scott's house was called Glen Welby, and its latchstring always hung outside the door for any Confederate soldier. I copy entire the account of this incident from Major John Scott's *Life of Mosby*:

"Since General Augur had taken up a position at Rectortown, his cavalry had foraged almost exclusively on the adjoining country. Every cornhouse and cornfield in a large area were visited almost daily, and it was only by secreting small quantities of grain in different places that families were enabled to preserve food for themselves and the little stock they had been able to retain. Among the farms most frequently visited by these foragers was Glen Welby, particularly obnoxious because of the entertainment which Mosby's men was known ever to receive beneath its hospitable roof.

"Early the next morning the watchful eye of Colonel Mosby discovered a column of one hundred and fifty of the enemy's cavalry approaching from the direction of Rectortown, the residence of Major Carter. It soon appeared that they were in search of hay, which they tied up in large bundles and placed across their horses. He had caught the Yankees *flagrante delicto*, and he meant to make them pay for it. As the column passed

out of the Glen Welby farm through a narrow lane formed by high stone fences, Lieutenant Grogan, with twenty men, charged and was soon in the midst of the surprised and dismayed foragers, pouring into them a destructive fire from their revolvers. At this time Mosby struck the column at another point, and made the rout complete. The flight was continued some distance before the Federals recovered from their dismay. Then they rallied, but not until Grogan had drawn off his party in safety. But this farce threatened to end in a tragedy, for soon Colonel Gallop, at the head of his regiment, made his appearance on the scene. Finding one of his men killed, and a good many lying wounded on the road and in the adjoining field, and learning that it had been all produced by a mere squad of Mosby's men, he was greatly enraged and determined that some one should suffer. And whom do you suppose were selected as the victims to be immolated by the wrathful officer? Mosby's men? No. Men capable of bearing arms against them? No. But a houseful of helpless women and a large family of children. Upon them he determined to take vengeance for this ordinary and lawfully belligerent act. In accordance with this purpose, Colonel Gallop, with his command, hastened to Glen Welby, in full view of which the fight, if such it can be called, had taken place. Very soon the house was surrounded, sentinels thrown out on every side, while a portion of the regiment dismounted, and, with their commander, entered the house. They were met

at the door by Mrs. Carter and her daughter, Mrs. Scott, whose husband, Major R. Taylor Scott, was likewise on duty with Lee's army. The officer's salutation was:

" 'We have come for the purpose of burning this house, and every building attached to the ground.'

"Mrs. Carter inquired the cause. Colonel Gallop replied:

" 'We have just been attacked by a party of Mosby's cut-throats on this place, and I have no doubt you had them concealed somewhere near by, and gave them information.'

"The ladies assured him that they knew nothing of Colonel Mosby's movements, and that the first knowledge they had had of the presence of his men was the firing of which he complained.

"But Colonel Gallop refused to credit a word they uttered, and said:

" 'I know, madam, you are in the habit of harboring those miserable cut-throats, and you shall suffer for it.'

"He immediately ordered a detail to be made to execute his threat to fire the buildings. This was a most trying moment. Mrs. Carter had been recently extremely ill, and was scarcely convalescent. Surrounded by her daughters, a niece, one son—a mere boy, and a tender nursling—she saw the incendiaries about to apply the torch to her home, which was a large and beautiful building, comfortably and tastefully furnished, and had been to herself and family for many years the

abode of comfort and happiness. In a few moments she was to witness its total destruction, and herself and family were to be turned out without a shelter. Yet even in this helpless and forlorn situation her fortitude did not desert her. She bore herself with such dignity, resignation and firmness that even the rude natures around her were softened by compassion. The simple request was made that time should be allowed to remove some clothing. Colonel Gallop replied: 'You may have five minutes!'

"A small quantity of clothing was accordingly brought out into the yard, but was seized and carried off by the soldiers in the presence of the officers, under the pretext of searching for something contraband. Soon the family, Mrs. Scott and her little son excepted, left the house condemned to the flames, the children in extreme terror, hiding themselves in the fields and orchard, while Mrs. Carter started in search of her infant, who, then sick and but imperfectly clothed, was exposed to the raw autumnal air. At this time occurred a scene of the most tragic interest, which would defy the pen even of the Wizard of the North to fully depict. Mrs. Scott, as heroic as she was gentle and beautiful, taking her little boy by the hand, seated herself in one of the parlors, saying: 'Well, my son, if they will burn this dear old home, we will perish in the flames.'

"This spectacle was too much for those American soldiers. Soon one of them, supposed to be a corporal, was seen to approach his commander and apparently to

expostulate with him. Just then Colonel Gallop inquired for Mrs. Carter, who was summoned from the field, and, in company with her daughter Sophie, known as 'The Rosebud' among the Rangers, approached the officer, who, in a very rough and unfeeling manner, began to address her; but Miss Sophie immediately interposed, saying:

" 'If I had known you had called for my mother to insult her, she should not have come!'

"The colonel, thus rebuked, concluded by saying:

" 'I have determined, madam, to spare your house this time; but if I ever catch or hear of one of these cut-throats being here again, nothing shall save the house or any building on the place.'

"To this Miss Sophie replied:

" 'We cannot make any promise of the kind; and if we did it would be impossible for us to keep it, for, when soldiers come, we cannot, if we would, order them away.' "

Glen Welby still stands, and for some years after the war visitors were shown the chair in the parlor where Mrs. Taylor Scott sat and delivered her ultimatum: "If they will burn this dear old home we will perish in the flames."

CHAPTER XX.

POOR SISTER JANE.

When Julien reached Mosby's Confederacy after his escape from the guardhouse, at Sir John's Run, he received from his comrades and friends an ovation that any man on earth would be proud of. They had given up all hope of ever seeing him again during the war, and they had pictured him as wearing out his life in some stone prison; they believed that he had gone the way of many a gallant partisan whose stirring adventures had changed to a passive prisoner called by a number, and whose very existence was but a memory.

The terrible hardships that Julien had undergone would, to the average man, have made him ultra cautious of entering any house in Mosby's Confederacy where there was the slightest danger of being captured like a coon in a hollow, or a possum in a log, but Julien was a soldier who loved to take chances. The only difference his prison experience had made was that he had sworn he would never surrender as long as there was a load in his Colt's. So he continued to visit houses without taking any precautions whatsoever; and, of course, the inevitable happened.

The aristocratic company of Mosby's Battalion was

Company D, and was made up of the beaux, fops and macarones. Many of the fun-loving Rough Riders used to whistle "Dandy Jim from Caroline" whenever they saw a Company D cavalryman pass by. Most of them were lads with beardless faces, and there was not a razor in the whole outfit. They could have dressed up in female attire and easily have passed as pupils of Mrs. Black's Select Female Academy. They were the pets of the ladies, and this troupe was aptly called "Company Darling," and they were the best dressed company of the battalion. Of course when a Yankee sutler's wagon was captured they went in for the cloth, while the rest of the command appropriated the solids and liquids. There was not a "Company Darling" man brave enough to wear a "biled" shirt, any more than he would carry an umbrella, but they had slouch hats, uniforms of fine texture and shapely cavalry boots, all spoils from the enemy. Their costumes were in marked contrast to that of their comrades in the field, the typical Johnny Rebs, as there was between Cinderella in her rags and her sisters in their satins. But these beardless youths could fight, as many a picked body of Federal troopers found to their cost, as they closed in a wild melee, when it was take and give and no quarter asked.

The troopers of the battalion were allowed to chose their own billets. Mosby gave them a free hand in that respect, and each man chose his home to suit his taste. No maneuvers were practiced, no guard duty, no picket

post; the men were expected to have sense enough to get away from the house if the enemy approached, and with a little caution and the constant watchfulness of the women very few of Mosby's men were captured. In the old Capital, in the early winter of 1863, when there were over six hundred Rebs from Lee's Army, I knew of only three who were Mosby's men.

Now it happened that Miss Hallie Hume was spending a few days at the home of Captain Ashby, who lived on the main road to Snicker's Gap. The captain was in the army, and only his wife, a grown daughter and a group of young children lived in the house. Miss Rose was an intimate friend of Hallie's, and they frequently exchanged visits when the times were propitious. Of course, Julien Robinson hung around the Ashby place, and he went there so often that he acted as if sweet peace reigned over the land.

It was a couple of months after his escape from the blazing chimney at St. John's Run that, one balmy spring morning when the air was redolent of those sweet, intangible odors that come with the opening buds and bursting blossoms, Julien, who had just returned from a scout in Fairfax County, rode up to the Ashbys' mansion. Alighting from his tired horse, he tied him to the hitching-post in front of the house, a first-rate notice to any passer-by that there was a Rebel cavalryman inside.

The family were at breakfast, and Julien received a warm greeting, of course; and he was soon showing

his hostess that there are times when a soldier can almost eat his own weight.

There was no suspicion of danger; the family said that they had not laid eyes on a Yankee for weeks, and they had not even heard that they had made any incursions in the country.

It is the unexpected that happens, in war as well as in civil life, and on that very day Colonel Gamble had been sent to scout through Warren and Loudoun Counties. On his return to camp near Falls Church he concluded to pass through Snicker's Gap and sweep through Mosby's Confederacy and see what was going on. When his advance picket reported that a cavalryman's horse was hitched in front of a house, he ordered a captain to take his company and surround the house, throwing a cordon around the rear the first thing, and then complete the circle and bag the game.

The faint hoof-stroke, growing louder, struck the ears of the inattentive household. They uttered exclamations of dismay. Julien was at the window in a bound; one look was enough! up the road, coming at a gallop, was a squadron of Bluecoats. He ran to the rear, with Hallie by his side, and as they opened the kitchen door they saw the ring of Federals in the orchard, closing in on the house. Julien's face grew grim, his eyes blazed, his mouth became a straight line; he unloosed the revolvers in their holsters and said: "I have taken a solemn oath never to be taken prisoner again; I will take my stand in this room."

“For heaven sake! Julien, you will not only lose your life, but cause the house to be burned down.” Then the light of inspiration gleamed in her eyes. “Follow me,” she cried, and going up the staircase like a flash entered her bedroom. Running to a bureau she opened a drawer and abstracted a nightgown and a nightcap. “Undress,” she said in a thrilling whisper. “Hide your clothes in the bed, not under it. You are my sick sister Jane. Open the door slightly when you are ready, and I will come in and nurse you.”

He opened his mouth to expostulate—

“Quick! quick! I hear them coming,” she said, and darted down stairs.

The troopers were even then dismounting at the gate. She rushed for her hostess:

“For the love of heaven, Mrs. Ashby, detain them as long as you can; Julien is in my bed and I will try and pass him off as my sick sister Jane. Ask the searching party not to alarm the sick lady upstairs.”

Before Mrs. Ashby could recover from her astonishment Hallie flew into the dining-room, seized a tray, tumbled some glasses and spoons upon it, and sped up stairs. She then dragged a small table to the bedside, placed a wet handkerchief upon the lad’s forehead, and then, white to the lips, sat down and waited.

I may say here, I never knew a man who had a more chivalrous regard for women than Julien Robinson, nor one who had greater pride and self-respect, and withal a keener sense of humor, and as he lay there in his

sweetheart's bed (the very last place on earth he would have chosen to hide) his unspoken monologue ran something like this:

"Here lies Julien Robinson in the couch of the woman he loves; am I happy? Not by a darn sight; I am a craven wretch, with a woman's nightcap on my head. Yet what could I do, run, and be shot in my tracks? Surrender and break my soldier's oath, and live a self-perjured traitor the rest of my days? Am I dreaming? Yes! it must be a dreadful nightmare; it can't be that I, Julien Robinson, a Cracker-jack of Company Darling of Mosby's Rough Riders, first one in advance, the last one in retreat, is lying here enacting a girl, with a nightcap on her head and a bad taste in her mouth. No! it is no dream; I have had many a nightmare in my life, but never one like this. Each man in his time plays many parts! then truly, I am the limit. First a dandy cavalryman, next a hang-dog prisoner, then a scarecrow fugitive, afterwards a highwayman, stopping a poor sutler on the king's highway and robbing him of all he possesses, and a few hours after I am metamorphosed into a puling, silk woman with a nightcap on my head. Why will women wear such things, anyhow? The woman I marry—pshaw! I wish I had a looking-glass to see myself as I really am; I know the sight would last me till my dying day. Suppose, after all, those confounded Yanks should discover the cheat and draw me out of bed, nightgown, nightcap and all! Oh! what a sight, my countrymen!

Riding in front of my captors, arrayed as no prisoner was ever arrayed since the world began; and, worse than all, have those confounded artists draw me, and show me up in the Northern papers under such flaring headlines as: 'How the Rebel Warrior Hid;' or, 'Is This a *Him* or a *Her*?,' or, 'This is the picture of Sister Jane of Mosby's Rangers.' And, oh! what would my good comrades say about poor, sick sister Jane? Oh! they would crack their ribs with laughter. Come to think of it, nearly all of Mosby's men, caught in houses, were discovered hidden under a bed, and no stigma or ridicule was attached, but to be caught *in* bed, clad in feminine gear! why, if Jove himself had been discovered in bed, with one of Juno's nightcaps on, he would have been laughed out of Olympus."

When the Federal captain at the head of some twenty Bluecoats strode into the passage, he found Mrs. Ashby and Rose standing there looking the picture of despair. The captain paused and saluted, and told her that it was his painful but imperative duty to seize the Rebel cavalryman, and if he would surrender quietly the house would not be disturbed; otherwise, he would have to go through the rooms, and that he would not be responsible for what might happen.

Rose declared that the scout had made his escape, but the cavalryman only laughed at her. Then Mrs. Ashby argued and pleaded with him not to search the house; that she had a daughter Jane just recovering from attack of typhoid fever. This was news to Rose,

but she caught the cue and sobbed over poor sister Jane, and said that any excitement might cause a relapse.

The officer reaffirmed that he must do his duty, and calling an orderly-sergeant directed him to examine the house from cellar to garret. The sergeant saluted and went up the stairs with his men, their sabres clanking against their spurs, and banging against the banisters.

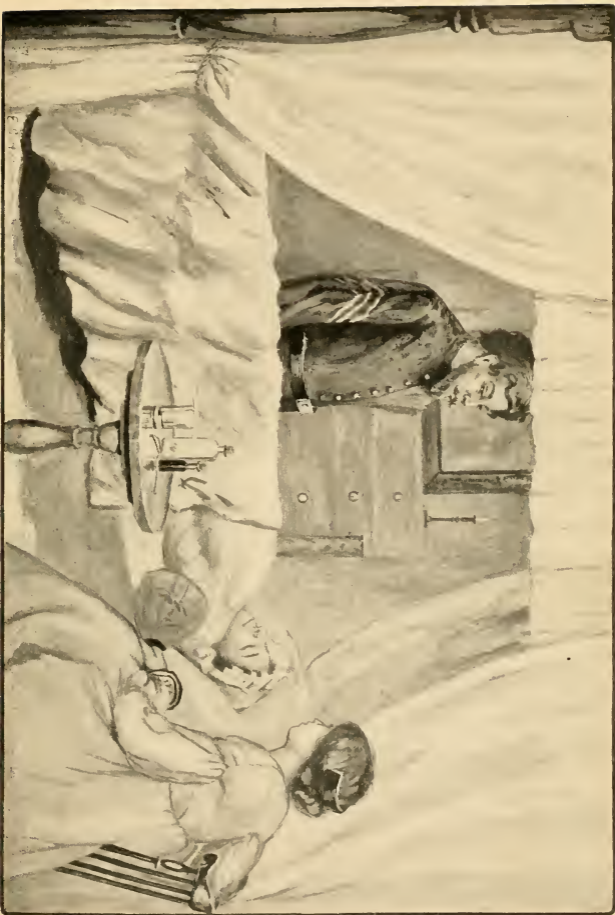
Upstairs poor, sick sister Jane heard them coming, with the same feelings that the condemned felon has when listening to the sound of the executioner mounting the stone steps of the prison stairway. The door opened and an orderly, followed by a file of men, entered. They came to a sudden halt at the sight that met their gaze: A form under the bedclothes, with nothing visible but a head lying on a pillow, the hair covered with a close-fitting nightcap, the face of a ghastly hue, as though Death had already imprinted his seal upon it. Sitting by the bedside, with a glass of medicine in her hand, was a fair, buxom girl whose attitude was that of deepest grief.

The sergeant advanced and swept the floor with his cap, and said it was the saddest task he ever undertook, but he must search the room! The girl replied that her poor sister Jane was still dangerously ill and that a sudden shock might kill her; and requested that they perform their duty as quickly as possible. The cavalryman said with unwonted gentleness that he had lost a sister by death only a year before, and that he would

search the room himself. He signaled his men to retire, and quickly and quietly proceeded to obey his orders: he peeped up the chimney, looked in the closet, moved the lounge, examined the windows, and lastly, approached the bed.

It was a crucial moment! The tension upon them both was terrible. Would the soldier insist upon touching and examining the patient? The man's movements were slow and deliberate; he bent down and carefully examined the space beneath the bed; then he arose, and both patient and nurse stiffened into stone. His eyes rested upon the face on the pillow. It seemed so wan and pale; the eyes were half-closed, and the breathing was hardly perceptible through the parted lips. A stillness, solemn and profound, ensued, broken only now and then by the sound of the muffled footsteps overhead, and the faint clink, clank of the sabre of some moving soldier. Human endurance has its limits, and it was strained to the breaking point as this bare-headed trooper bent over the prostrate form. Whether he had any suspicions, what feelings of emotion, or what thoughts passed through his mind, they never knew. At last he turned, and without a word left the room. Julien said afterwards that he felt an insane desire to burst into a fit of laughter. Hallie acknowledged that it was only by a powerful effort of will that she refrained from shrieking.

Both actors in this drama gave a gasp of relief; but neither spoke a word until sure the danger was gone!



"His eyes rested upon the face on the pillow."

After a short interval they heard the word of command from the officer in charge and the sounds of departure of the cavalry detachment. The woman went to the window and in a moment returned to the bedside. "Thank God! they have gone," she breathed rather than spoke.

The invalid lifted his head from the pillow, a bright sparkle in his eye, and said:

"Hallie, poor sister Jane feels like she would like to have a drink."

A few minutes later a dashing cavalryman entered the parlor, armed cap a pie; it was the whilom sister Jane. A consultation ensued between him and the household, and for many reasons the affair should be kept quiet; so they all pledged themselves to inviolate secrecy. Later Julien confided it to me under the same pledge. And now, after a half-century, when the chief participants have "passed across the river," I tell it as it was unfolded to me. Miss Rose told me afterwards that when the Yankees had left she found her mother in the dining-room on her knees, but whether it was a prayer of thanksgiving she offered up to heaven, or whether she was asking forgiveness for that pyrotechnical falsehood about sister Jane, Miss Rose said she couldn't tell to save her life.

CHAPTER XXI.

CAPTAIN SUMNER OF THE FIRST NEW YORK CAVALRY SALUTES THE STARS AND BARS.

The railroad running from Gordonsville, Va., to Washington, D. C., cuts Fauquier County into two parts. The east half is rolling and undulating, a succession of hills and valleys as fertile as the famous blue grass of Kentucky. The country lying on the west of the railway is low and flat, with a sandy soil; only here and there is an elevation that rises above the level surface.

When the Federal Army camped in Piedmont, Va., they had only two routes to draw their supplies and munitions of war—one was over the old Orange and Alexandria Railroad, the other by water to Acquia Creek. Warrenton Junction was the right flank and the left was Falmouth, opposite Fredericksburg, the Rappahannock River separating the two armies. Both of these flanks were heavily guarded and connected by a broad country road some twenty miles long. The river was strongly picketed, and the infantry camps stretched at intervals along the thoroughfare.

Mosby's partisans, as a rule, left this part of Fauquier severely alone. The long road offered them

many chances for a dash on the convoys, but the risk was too great, as three sides were occupied by the enemy, with telegraph lines along the route, and they had only one part of the square open for retreat, and that could be closed if an alarm was given, making the place a veritable *cul de sac*. But the road was unsafe for small parties, as the Federals soon found out. Small squads of the Black Horse and dismounted cavalrymen on the lookout for horses kept a close watch on this turnpike; and any group of cavalrymen or sutler's wagon that attempted to traverse this road would rarely ever reach its destination.

As a general thing this section was inhabited by the yeomanry who worked small farms—a large freehold was the exception, not the rule. Not far from the little village of Morrisville and within gunshot of the turnpike was the estate of one of the Paynes, one of the few large farms. The house, a large roomy mansion, was on the crest of one of the few hills in that section. When the battle of Fredericksburg took place on the memorable 13th day of December, 1862, and the thunder of two hundred cannon filled the air, it was too much for Mr. Payne. He took counsel of his fears and gathering up the "lares and penates" he bundled his family and one or two household servants into the carriage; and, filling the wagons and carts with furniture and provisions, he abandoned his home and started southward, hoping to find some spot where gentle peace brooded over the land. The house soon be-

came a wreck and was literally the abode of bats and owls.

Even when the Federals sent a single courier from one camp to another, though the distance was not over a mile, a company of cavalry guarded him with as much care as if he had been the general of the brigade himself. The infantryman on his two legs strolled along this long road at his leisure, it was none of his funeral. The Rebel scout was not after him; his poverty, like many others in different walks of life, was his safeguard.

Dick Martin of the Black Horse had an encounter with some of the Blue Blouses that will point a moral even if it does not adorn a tale. Dick at that time was a harum scarum fellow of about twenty, a born scout who was always seeking adventures, and loving hazard for danger's sake.

One day he was prowling in the woods on foot near an infantry camp when he saw a half-dozen soldiers leave their quarters and make their way down a branch. This excited his curiosity, and he followed them for about a mile, then they halted and Dick wondered what they were up to. He was not kept long in suspense. They gathered together under a large tree, took off their coats, spread an oilcloth on the ground, disgorged several bottles, next a deck of cards and a box of bone chips. Then after taking "a smile" all round, they sat themselves down tailor fashion and began to deal the cards. Then Dick knew that they were indulging in

that fascinating pursuit known as draw poker. Dick's curiosity changed into a deep interest, for he was an expert in that game, as many of the Black Horsemen found out to their sorrow, so he edged himself to a clump of briars within a few feet of the players. They were so intensely absorbed in the game that they did not look up, save when the bottle was passed around, then Dick's mouth would water, and it required all his self-control to refrain from rushing forward and taking a swig himself.

So the forenoon wore away and the man in the bushes noticed that the chips all gravitated one way, and hands went into pockets and greenbacks were handed over to buy more chips from the pile, but they would gravitate as at first, and as the passion of greed and gaming, fed by the liquor, rose in each breast the stakes grew larger and the betting fiercer. Nothing was heard but the mysterious words: "Jack pot, Kitty! Raise you! Pass! One card; two cards; three cards. Flush; full house;" and constantly the chips were scooped up by one man, who retailed for cash, until the winner had a big wad of the green on the grass, upon which he placed a bottle to keep the notes from blowing away.

Finally Dick got tired, and jumping to his feet he cried: "Surrender! Hands up!"

Now, if Satan himself, with horns, hoof and tail, smelling with sulphur, with eyes of flame, had jumped in the ring, he could not have created more dismay.

The players' hands went up spasmodically, and they seemed turned into stone and sat there, stolid, motionless, and stared and stared with mouths agape.

Dick's words eased the situation. "Gentlemen," he said, making a courtly bow, for your real highwayman is always polite, "I don't mean any harm, but I'm playing a lone hand and want that pile." It was silently handed him by the winner, and at this the losers perked up, the color came to their cheeks, the light to their eyes, the open mouths closed in a grin, and then opened again in convulsive laughter, all except the winner. He couldn't see the point in the joke. One of the players handed Dick the bottle and he took "a smile," a very long one indeed, and then disappeared in the bushes. He did not search the other men. I never knew a Black Horseman to rob a prisoner, but I am bound to confess that I did not know the Black Horseman who would have let that Yankee gambler walk off with his ill-gotten gains.

After the war Dick emigrated to Missouri, became a schoolmaster, got converted, dropped his evil ways and married, and became an estimable citizen and pillar of the church. This was a combination of righteousness that would lead one to expect that the conscience fund of the War Department would be enriched to the amount that he cabbaged from that Yankee sport, but Dick was not that kind of hairpin Christian.

The Payne place was a favorite rendezvous in those summer days of 1863 for the children living near, and

a wrecked house, especially if it has any windows to smash, possesses an irresistible attraction to the average boy.

There was one lad living in that locality, aged almost ten summers, who had a big bump of ambition in his head, an inspiring idea in his brain and a love for Old Virginia in his heart, so he formed a military company, anything on two legs, no matter how small, was eligible. Captain Stringfellow had gotten his mother to make him a Confederate uniform, his company of a dozen or so, running from five years to nine, and varying in height from thirty inches to four feet, were dressed as they saw fit; some had an old gray jacket that came to their knees, some had caps, others slouch hats and some heads were covered with nothing but nature's tow-colored hair; all were barefooted. The whole were armed with sabres. As they had not place to put the belt they carried the martial weapons on their shoulders. They had no bugle, for there was not breath enough even in the biggest of the lot to fill anything larger than a penny whistle; but they had a real drum, and the fellow that wielded the sticks was the proudest warrior of the lot except one, and he was the standard-bearer. The flag was a small one, made by one of the boys out of a piece of cotton, with the Southern Cross painted on one side only, its staff was a broomstick, and the colors were carried by the tallest boy of the lot.

As the command was neither infantry, artillery nor cavalry, they had no drill. Captain Stringfellow, with

the instinct of a born leader, had only instructed his command to charge and follow. Such words as retrograde and retreat had no place in his vocabulary. With the drummer well in the advance, beating his instrument for all it was worth, Captain Stringfellow next to him, waving his sword in the air and crying: "Chargem! Chargem!" they presented a very martial sight indeed, and made as big a racket and noise as if it were the "real thing."

Now, it happened that Captain Sumner of the First New York Cavalry was convoying with a squadron an ordnance wagon to Falmouth, when he heard the rolling of a drum. He halted his command and listened. Yes, there was no mistake, and sounding clear above the drum beat was the Rebel yell. "Heaven and earth! it must be that the Rebels have crossed the river," thought the captain, "and listen to that, the roll of the drum shows that they are Lee's infantry. It may be that the whole Rebel army has crossed the Rappahannock, captured all the pickets, and is in full tilt for Washington." Now, what must he do? Had it been this time last year he would have struck for Warrenton Junction, roused the whole cavalry division and there would have been hot haste in mounting the panoplied steeds of war, and Pleasanton with his whole cavalry division would have rushed to the scene, but Captain Sumner was a veteran soldier, who did not give away to a panic. He remembered, doubtless, of the circumstance that happened when a little drummer of Long-

street's brigade went in the woods to practice near Munson's Hill, close to Alexandria (the first few months after the war began), and the sound of the *pas de charge* put the whole picket line to flight and caused McDowell's whole camp to form in line of battle.

Captain Sumner, after studying the situation, decided to advance cautiously. Forming his command in fours, he came within a few hundred yards of the Payne house; and, leaving his command, rode forward alone to reconnoiter. He beheld through the bushes moving figures on the lawn, and caught the gleam and flash of the weapons.

A company of Rebel infantry, he reasoned, that got detached from the main body, and here and now was the golden chance to strike a sudden blow and take the enemy by surprise. His mind was made up; all his soldierly instincts were aroused. He rode back to his command and gave orders to draw sabres and follow him. He started his command in a slow walk until he reached the foot of the hill; then, turning, he gave the order: "Forward! Charge!" Like the dash of a torrent, the rush of the billows, the drive of an avalanche, he burst into the yard. He had caught the enemy by surprise. There was no resistance. The troopers in blue at his command checked their headlong speed and came to a standstill, and gazed bewildered at the scene. Some of the youthful Rebels had taken to flight, their spindle legs carrying them to the house, the

drummer dropped his warlike instrument and tumbled down a ditch; but there were two boys that stood fast in their tracks and faced the sweeping charge of the blue squadron. One was the captain, the other the bearer of the guerdon.

When Captain Sumner reined in his horse and surveyed the scene and beheld the two lads white and scared, but standing dauntless and defiant; when he beheld the rest of the children in inglorious flight, he "caught on" and he could only ejaculate: "Well, I'll be damned."

Captain Sumner, in telling Miss Marsteller of Cattle's Station of this occurrence, said: "I saluted the captain and I saluted the flag, and my men simply went wild. It was a touch of nature that made all hearts akin." And so the kids returned home, proud of having seen something of real war.

There are in the South today many precious heirlooms of that great conflict we called the Civil War, or war between the States, many relics, many reminders that are sacred and guarded with zealous care, but I would rather possess that little home-made battle flag, that was carried by that valiant boy, than all the rest.

CHAPTER XXII.

“BERT” POLLOCK’S RIDE.

A Southern orator, in speaking to a great assemblage of his people, said: “When the last Confederate soldier dies, chivalry in America will die with him.” Now, if he had said: “The American soldier,” I would have tipped glasses with him, for several instances that came under my personal observation during the Civil War, one act, especially of a Federal soldier, was so chivalric that its parallel can hardly be matched in the annals of war, as a perusal of this chapter will prove.

That “truth is stranger than fiction” was often exemplified during the Civil War. Another instance of this truth is the daring action of another Virginia maiden; and it seems incredible to the humdrum, peaceful life that our American women lead today. None but a participant in the Civil War can comprehend how a woman’s nerves can be keyed up to a state of utter self-abnegation by breathing the air, vibrating with burning excitement. Under such conditions their natures seem to change, and they dare and do things which they would shrink and fly from in a more peaceful atmosphere.

At the beginning of the Civil War there was, on the

outskirts of Warrenton, a large plantation owned by Rev. Doctor Pollock. Many years before he had been a Pennsylvania Presbyterian minister, and, being stationed in Virginia, his stately figure and burning eloquence won, against all comers, the hand and fortune of Miss Lizzie Lee, a beauty and an heiress. Two sons and three daughters blessed their union. The elder son, Inspector General of Pickett's Division, was killed in the charge at Gettysburg. The daughters were known throughout the country side as the "Three Graces." The youngest, Roberta Pollock, the heroine who saved Mosby and a great portion of his command from capture, was at the time in her teens. She was the embodiment of Shakespeare's description, "A young budding virgin, fair, fresh and sweet"—of medium height, of the sylph rather than the Hebe style; such a combination of the lily and the rose, with glorious eyes and perfect mouth, are rarely seen in one woman. She was endowed with many charms and an intellect unusual in a girl of her age. "Bert" was the pet of the family, and had never spent a night away from home. To think of this gentle, refined, tender girl daring what she did! There were fair Parisians in the thrilling "days of the Terror" who faced danger and death without a tremor, yet there we find no parallel. Walter Scott, in his tales of the Highlanders and the Lowlanders, gives us scarcely a parallel. Even the story of Effie Dean's devotion pales before the achievement of the Virginia maiden. To face danger, to face death, and

worse than all, possible outrage in the gloom and blackness of night for one's country, is an ordeal that few women would or could endure.

A great writer once said:

"Love of country in times of civil war works a miracle in woman. Men have not the steadfast patriotism of women, for they do not possess their imagination."

As before stated, the Federals tried every measure, used every expedient, set every trap ever conceived by military mind to secure Mosby and his men. The Jessie Scouts, Baker's detectives, deserters, spies, scouting parties, midnight raids, ambuscades, all failed, but by a singular caprice of Fate, an unlettered negro came within an ace of succeeding. If Miss "Bert" Pollock had not chanced to walk to Warrenton that day, Mosby's history would have had a different reading, and there would have been weeping throughout "The Debatable Land."

It was a bitter cold day in December, 1864, just before Christmas, and in every soldier's heart was the feeling that fighting for a time should cease. Lee's army was on the south side of the Rappahannock River, and the Federals were on the north. There was a truce, for the time, between the fighting men of both armies, and Yank and Reb walked along the river's banks in the open, and shouted to one another the compliments of the season.

As bonny, lissom "Bert" Pollock walked along the

streets of Warrenton on her way to pay a visit, muffled to the ears, for a stinging northwest wind was blowing, she raised her eyes and saw a negro of middle age escorted by a guard of soldiers, and followed by several officers who seemed greatly excited. The whole party entered a dilapidated brick building occupied by the provost-marshal.

Suspecting that the negro had valuable information to impart concerning the partisans, the Virginia maiden determined to find out what trouble was brewing. But how?

The office of the provost-marshal was on the first floor, and a sentinel stood at each door that led into the street. Closing the rear door behind her Miss "Bert" started to go in the room, telling the sentinel that she wanted to see the provost. The guard replied that it was impossible, as he was at that time busily engaged, and that he had orders to admit no one to the house.

"Well," said Miss "Bert," "I must see him. I am sure I will freeze to death in the streets, and besides my shoes are very thin. Please let me go in and wait in the passage."

The guard was a young man, evidently unmarried, and susceptible to female charms, and to see a girl suffer was too much for his patriotism or his philanthropy. He had heard, no doubt, how the Rebel girls gained information for their friends, but surely there could be no guile in this blue-eyed maid; then, again,

she was such a winsome lass that he forgot all his warnings. Every man is fooled some time or other by a pretty woman; so he lowered his musket, and Miss "Bert" passed in, warming his heart by a dazzling smile. She knew the building well, and went down stairs into the cellar, and standing by the aperture where once was a stairway, she heard every word that was uttered.

The negro was speaking. He told them how he lived at Mr. Rector's, a few miles from Salem, and how one of the Fauquier girls was to be married to a soldier, and that the rangers were going to celebrate the rare event in great style; how the next night (Christmas Eve) there would be a wedding, and that Mosby and all the rangers would be present.

He was asked whether his absence would not be suspected, but he said no, that all the scouts knew him, and that he often took his master's musket, and with home-made shot would shoot old hares and quail on the ground. That he had told Mr. Rector that he was going to have a long hunt and get all the game he could for the bridal supper. That he had slipped through the woods, and he concluded by saying he wanted to start North by the first train.

Miss "Bert" hurried out of the front door, past the astonished sentinel, who wondered how the girl got in, and walked the streets with her mind in a tumult. What had she better do? The town was not only heavily

guarded, but was encircled with a strong cordon of pickets with double guards between the town and Salem, Mosby's headquarters.

Nine hundred and ninety-nine women out of one thousand would have imparted her tidings of pressing import to some of the townsmen, and then have gone home feeling glowing satisfaction that their work had been so well done. But the thousandth woman had brain as well as beauty, and she reasoned that no ordinary person, in fact, no one, could reach Mosby in time. Every foot in the circle around Warrenton was guarded and absolutely no ingress or egress was allowed. Again and again had Doctor Chilton tried to reach his patients in the country whom he knew required his attendance, and had offered to give bond to attend strictly to his professional business. His character was so high that his word was the same as his bond, but the military authorities had no option, word had come from headquarters that no visiting of any kind between citizens should be allowed. The Federals were striving by every means to capture the partisans, and the military net was so tightly drawn around the city that no inside information could possibly filter through, so it was thought, and the girl was aware of all this. She was devoted, heart and soul, to her cause, and she came to the conclusion to do, dare, and if needs be, to die. She walked about the town considering her plan; finally she decided to make a dash on horseback rather than try to evade the pickets by stealing past them. It hap-

pened, as she passed the sutler's store, that she noticed two horses, one evidently belonging to some officer, while the other carried a lady's saddle, hitched in front of the store. Miss Pollock did not hesitate a moment; she untied the horse, led him to a curbstone, and with her heart nearly bursting, climbed into the saddle and set off at a canter, uttering a prayer that the owner would not miss the steed until she would be well out of town. Facing danger was one thing, but being arrested for horse-stealing was quite another matter. However, she made her way down a back street, flanked the town, and reached the first picket line through which her pass admitted her to proceed to her home. When she reached her front gate she stopped to plan out her route. Several miles away was a mountain spur which she would have to cross by the county roads, and which were heavily guarded. In some places the country was open, but very rough in others.

The sun was sinking behind the crags of the old Blue Ridge when the maid turned to take one last look at her home, the window panes reflecting the red gleams of the setting sun. It must have been a pathetic scene. I asked her, a few months later, what her feelings were as she turned for a farewell glance upon her home. She laughed and said that she thought of her mother, making a fuss because she had to hold back supper for her. It was a custom of the old minister to have all his family present when he said grace.

The girl turned her horse and cantered across what

was once a broomsedge field, but was now fast relapsing into its primeval wilds.

Had it been broad day Miss Pollock would have struck a bee-line for her destination, for she had ridden for miles across this section gathering chestnuts, and knew the locality thoroughly, but as the shadows began to fall the bushes, trees and the ground became merged into one opaque hue, and she knew that she must trust to Chance or Fate.

The horse ambled on, and soon the darkness became complete, the stillness profound. She had to leave the reins loose on the animal's neck; there must have been some road or path, for the beast kept on in a fast walk.

Few people, comparatively speaking, have ever been alone, defenceless, in a strange place, surrounded by impenetrable darkness. It is an ordeal for the strongest, and to an imaginative person the situation is harrowing. Then morbid fancy has full sway and runs riot. In vain calm reason tries to resume its control. A wild panic ensues; hideous pictures, grotesque phantoms, horribly realistic, throng the brain. One takes counsel only of one's fears. Shadows? Only shadows, but they are deep, dark, harrowing.

“By the apostle Paul, shadows tonight
Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard.”

To this high-strung girl, Fate could have offered no severer test. She had only to turn her horse, and all

her trials would be ended; to keep on was but a journey of horrors. *But she kept on.*

It was bitterly cold, and the frequent contact with bushes by the roadside, the overhanging limbs surcharged with rime, covered her from head to foot and chilled her to the bone. Hours had passed, but she had lost all count of time or place. Suddenly she ran into a cavalry vidette. They were in the woods, and the leaves deadened the sound of her horse's foot-falls, and the scout did not hear her approach until she was within a few feet of him. Then in her ears sounded his stern "Halt! Who goes there?" Then followed the click of the hammer as the cavalryman cocked his carbine.

A dramatist would hesitate long before placing upon the stage a stalwart trooper, armed to the teeth, opposed only by a delicate maiden of seventeen, and then cause that soldier to seek safety in headlong flight from the fair Elaine; yet such was the actual fact.

Again the challenge rang out: "Halt! Who goes there?"

She came near screaming aloud, but in a second the girl's wits brightened and in a flash thoughts were busily forming in her brain. Knowing the terror Mosby had inspired by his night attacks, with a sudden impulse, in a voice which had become hoarse with emotion, she ordered the vidette to "surrender."

The ruse succeeded perfectly. There was no reply save the sound of rapidly retreating hoofs. It was learned afterward that the vidette never stopped until

he reached his post; there he asserted that he had narrowly escaped capture by the partisans, and only by the swiftness of his horse.

The deadly fear that blanched the girl's cheeks had passed and the reaction almost made her fall from her horse. However, she rallied, and in a few moments emerged in the open. From this high point she saw to her dismay the lights of Warrenton not more than four or five miles distant; then she knew she had traveled in a half-circle, and for the first time since darkness settled down she discovered her exact location. She knew that by bearing to the south she would strike the county road that led to Salem. She was shivering with cold, and weary in both body and mind. The night had waned, and the pole star had risen to its zenith. In her forlorn condition it required almost a super-human effort to carry her forward; but in that slender, girlish form there dwelt a spirit that was twin to the heroic soul of Charlotte Corday or that of Jeanne d'Arc.

"The partisans must be saved," was the refrain that rang through her brain, and into the dark forest she plunged, urging her weary horse onward.

After going several miles she was crossing an open field, when she again heard the sharp command to halt, and before she had time to rouse herself a Federal trooper was beside her and had grasped her bridle rein, and she found herself a prisoner.

There under the light of the stars was enacted a scene to delight the eyes and stir one's blood.

The girl could dimly see her captor, one hand firmly grasping the bridle, while the other held a Colt's revolver.

"Who are you, and where are you going?" he asked.

In a tone of innocence and candor which so well became her youth and beauty, she said that she had started to visit relatives, one of whom was very ill, that she had lost her way. The cavalryman then told her that it was his painful duty to conduct her to the reserve, some distance away, where her case would be looked into; and that he had strict orders to arrest any person who crossed his beat without regard to color, age or sex.

"I will not go," cried the girl; "you may shoot me, but I will not go."

"It is my orders," he replied.

"I am willing for you to perform your duty," said she, "but I will either die here or go free." The soldier's arm dropped from the bridle rein.

"No one could be cruel enough to detain you," he said. "Now listen! There is a farmhouse about a mile away; I will escort you there, but I will have to flank the reserve; so let your horse follow mine." And he rode on in the silent, dark woods.

I knew Miss Pollock intimately, and heard from her own lips the story of that night's adventures shortly after they occurred. I asked her if she did not feel

afraid to trust herself with an enemy in the darkness of a dense forest? She answered, "No!" She said that she could not see his face plainly, yet the tone of his voice was positive sincerity, and intuition bade her place absolute faith in him.

During the ride neither spoke. The house was reached by a circuitous route, and the inmates were aroused and received their visitors with warmth. The cavalryman did not offer to shake hands when Miss Pollock bade him good-night and thanked him, but sat on his horse at the door and said: "I have three hours yet of picket duty, and I will spend the time in thinking of the half-frozen Virginia girl." He then gave a military salute, touched his steed with his spur, and vanished in the darkness.

Major John Scott incidently mentions this occurrence, and though he wrote at a time when resentment and rancor were dominant, he yet felt constrained to say: "That sentinel was not made of common earth!" And the more we contemplate the scene and its surroundings, the more thoroughly we agree with him. A Union soldier in the enemy's land, yes, in the detested Mosby's Confederacy; in the darkness of night a beautiful girl rides, all alone, into his arms. What a temptation for a young man full of the fire of life, and with none to stay the law of might, the rights of conquest! Yes, beneath that soiled and rusted blue uniform beat the heart of a man! Not even in old Froissart's chronicles was there a more chivalric act. It sounds like a *t ale*

“Will spend the time thinking of the half-frozen Virginia girl!”





from *Morte d'Arthur and His Twelve Knights of the Round Table*, whose exploits were enriched by every noble trait; it reminds one of a romance from the Breton ballads of *Charlemagne a la barbe*, or the legends of Roland.

The rising sun was just touching the tips of the Blue Ridge with a roseate hue when Miss "Bert" mounted her horse and started in a swift gallop for Salem. Mrs. Marshall's boy, a lad of some ten years, took to the woods and struck for the same place; in case one failed the other would succeed. But no mishap occurred, and the tidings were passed from mouth to mouth.

That night one thousand picked men from Kilpatrick's cavalry detachment swept silently through the woods and surrounded Salem and its vicinity. Every house was searched from cellar to garret, but it was a water-haul, and not a Rebel soldier was captured. As for the "colored gent," no one ever knew for a certainty what became of him; the rangers swore to perforate his hide if they ever saw him. The Union cavalymen who had had an all night ride were mad all through, and declared that if they ever laid eyes on that "reliable contraband" they would swing him from the first tree. Which side got him was never divulged; but one darkey mysteriously disappeared, and in military parlance "was never accounted for."

In an old war scrapbook I found pasted the following dispatch, cut from the *Washington Chronicle*, dated Warrenton, December 26, 1864:

“Last night a picked squadron consisting of detachments from the Eighth Illinois Cavalry, Seventeenth Pennsylvania and the Fifth Michigan Cavalry left Warrenton late on the evening of Christmas Eve to bag Mosby. The officers, it is said, had certain information of his whereabouts, but if they had *the secret was betrayed*, for not a Rebel was captured, though many houses were searched. The march was a severe one, over almost impassable mountain-trails and half-obliterated country roads. The troopers suffered greatly, and they were in anything but a joyous mood on their return from the goose-chasing expedition. However, the boys braced up, and their night’s ride was a fine appetizer for a bountiful Christmas dinner supplied by ‘Old Sanitary.’ ”

CHAPTER XXIII.

AUNT EM SPREADS HERSELF.

It was a hot October afternoon in the year 1864, and a deathly stillness brooded over the hills and dales of Mosby's Confederacy. In a dense body of pines Hipkins, of Mosby's battalion, lay asleep on a blanket spread on the ground. His horse, saddled and bridled, was hitched by a halter to a tree. The animal was in fine fettle, well fed and perfectly groomed, for the steed was dearer to the ranger's heart than anything that walked, flew or crawled. Perchance, had the rough rider been obliged to give up either his steed or his sweetheart, the maiden would have had to go, for the horse was his sole capital in trade, his pistols merely an adjunct. A dismounted ranger was like a fiddle without a bow.

A casual observer would have wondered how the partisans kept their horses in such prime condition in a country so pillaged and harried as Mosby's Confederacy, but the fact was that the enemy supplied the forage as he did the other munitions of war. It only needed a dash on a wagon train to keep them amply supplied with abundance of oats, corn and baled hay.

A cavalryman naturally grows fond of his mount.

but the tie that binds the ranger to his horse is doubly strong, because the steed is his associate by day and his comrade by night, and an intelligent, blooded horse, after a few months of close companionship, will serve his master as faithfully as a dog. Some of the horses of Mosby's men were trained to a docility that was marvelous, and often their watchfulness saved their masters' lives. The scriptural verse, "The war horse sniffs the battle from afar," is not altogether a metaphor, for the booming of a gun, or the crack of a pistol or carbine, would wake the horses of Mosby's men to vivid life. If the riders left those horses free to follow their own wills, they would strike a bee-line for skirmish or fight, and seemed to enjoy as much as their masters the charge and counter charge.



Mosby's command was the best mounted of any in America. His men, let us not forget, had the pick of the Federal corrals.

Private Hipkins awoke from his slumber, rose to his feet and indulged in the luxury of sundry jaw-breaking yawns. His horse seeing him moving

whinnied plaintively; and his master, untying a bag of oats lying near, emptied a portion on his rubber

poncho. Then he changed the bridle to a halter and gave the horse his feed. Then Hipkins, filling his pipe from the tobacco bag hanging from a button on his jacket, struck a match, lit the briar-root; and, reclining against a tree, gave himself up to a smoker's reverie. After a while he knocked the ashes from the bowl, placed it in his inner jacket pocket, rose to his feet and made his way through the coppice to the edge of the field, where he stopped and gazed long and wistfully at the only house in sight. It was a large frame house with porches on three sides, situated on the summit of a high hill and surrounded by open fields. It was a bad place for a scout to be caught in, either by day or at night, for lying hid or a dash for liberty was impossible. Two of Mosby's men had been captured in that very house within the past year, and private Hipkins knew this, and moreover, it was positively against orders for any of the partisans to stop at any place for a lengthened visit unless there was a good line of retreat. Capture meant confinement until the end of the war, for all exchange of prisoners had stopped by order of the Federal Government. But there was a "maiden fair to see" in that mansion, and if others had risked life and liberty to watch the light in her eyes, the roseate hue on her cheeks—why, there were others no less brave. Hipkins was so tired of yawning his head off in the weary solitude of the pines that he made up his mind to pay that girl a short visit, and trust to luck. So he made ready. First he securely tied his horse, next

examined his brace of Colt's revolvers, with which every one of Mosby's men was armed. Then he climbed a tree that stood on a hill nearby, and with a field glass closely scrutinized the surrounding country. Not a moving object met his eye, and feeling confident that it was perfectly safe, Private Hipkins struck straight across the fields, making no attempt at concealment. Once seated in the parlor with an appreciative damsel beside him, he lost all idea of time, chance or circumstance. But his love dream was shattered, and his manly ardor was changed into cold chills as the strident voice of Aunt "Em" was heard: "De Yankees is a comin'. Dey's almost here," she almost screamed.

The house of the Faulkners faced the public road, some forty yards distant, which forked about a mile away, one branch going to Upperville, the other leading straight to Ashby's Gap. It is a curious fact that the partisans had no regular pickets, and the enemy once through the Gap were in the very heart of Mosby's Confederacy. A score or so of Mosby's men had been surprised and captured by some raiding squadron of Bluecoats who slipped through the defile unnoticed.

The Faulkner house had a porch running along the entire front, and on its steps that autumn afternoon was seated "Aunt Em," the cook, one of the old family servants who stuck by the family through thick and thin. Nearly a half century before, in the room over the kitchen, "Aunt Em" was born. There she was raised, and in the same room she had brought five chil-

dren into the world; and she used to say that "please God, I'se guine die in it."

"Aunt Em" had been queen of the kitchen and sovereign of her realm for many years. It had been Mrs. Faulkner's boast that she had the best cook in the county, and after eating one of "Aunt Em's" dinners the guests, if it so happened they had epicurean taste, generally conceded that fact. A trained cook is a gem, but a born cook is a pearl beyond price; for such an artist gives more pleasure and placid content in a lifetime than any wielder of the painter's brush or sculptor's chisel. "Aunt Em" could have gone to any city and by her culinary attainments clothe herself in silk and satin. Her boiled ham was a delight, and her roasted leg of mutton was a thing to dream about.

"Aunt Em" was short, fat, and black as a coal, but her soul was white as the driven snow. When the family servants left to avoid starvation, "Aunt Em" remained, saying what the family could live on she could, too. What anguish of spirit, what torture of soul this artist had to endure when she prepared the mess of cow-beans and salt-horse, only the angels could tell. Michael Angelo making plaster casts, or Rubens white-washing a fence, would be a fit parallel. Imagine "Aunt Em's" reflections as she prepared the family dinner, using for the hunk of camp pork the same rotund iron pot that had been sacred to the boiling of Smithfield ham; and imagine her carrying in the dinner in person, a proceeding that no decent cook, at the be-

ginning of the war, had ever been known to do; and see the air of outraged pride of the queen of the kitchen as she placed the meager fare on the table with many a grunt of contempt and disgust. As she potted about the kitchen preparing the meals (God save the mark) she must have done a lot of thinking, seeing that the breakfast consisted of only plain corn pone, or hardtack and coffee; and such coffee! made of toasted rye, or roasted chestnuts, and tea?—yes, the latter made of sassafras roots sweetened with sorghum molasses, a concoction that warmed the stomach, provided it remained long enough; a beverage that was, to a Southerner, as hard to swallow as the oath of allegiance. Conceive if you can the anguish of soul of this splendid cook who had for a score of years catered to the cultivated taste of gourmonds in her own dainty way, compelled to serve mule rump and cow-beans. Think of the cravings of her own stomach, “with good capon lined”—lo, these many years, as she tried to fill that delicate, pampered organ with sawdust pone and salt horse. Consider, too, that she did this from choice, not from iron-clad necessity. Truly no human heart beat more fondly, no human soul clung more strongly to those she loved than did that ebony heroine whose skin only was black.

“Aunt Em” was but the type of many servants of the South. Is there any statue of bronze too large or column of granite too high to commemorate the virtues

of the faithful, tender and true black mammys of the South?

Just before the news of the Yankees, "Aunt Em" had strolled out of the kitchen with her corncob pipe in her mouth, for there was nothing doing in her line in the house at that time of day. Tough living had changed her rotund, roly-poly figure into a stocky one; the shiny sleekness of skin that in the African tells of rich nourishment had given place to a dull, dead jet; and her eyes were sunken and bleery like those seen in hungry animals; her old calico dress was tucked up at one side, as was the way of all cooks who prepared their meals at the open fireplace; a bandana handkerchief was twisted into a turban, and soldier's brogans covered her feet. Even those great shoes had many wide gaps in the uppers, which had been slashed with a knife to allow ample room for corns. As this very day happened to be wash day, "Aunt Em's" stockings were hanging on the clothes-line.

For some time before the alarm, "Aunt Em" sat on the porch steps and puffed at her corncob pipe, filled with "niggerhead," which was tobacco pure and simple, the kind the darkeys preferred to the manufactured brands. It was a lovely scene her eyes rested upon: the cloud-flecked sky overhead, the trees clothed in bright colors of yellow, green and crimson; the waters of the creek gleaming like silver in the shade and like gold in the sunshine. Afar off was the Blue Ridge,

dimly visible through the soft, radiant glow of the Indian summer afternoon.

The langorous air had its effect upon "Aunt Em;" her eyes closed, her head nodded and the smoke drifted from her mouth. Suddenly her eyes opened; she straightened herself, and the pipe fell clattering to the ground unheeded, for she saw before her her youngest child, a kid of eight or nine years, in a wild flight, his eyes protruding and breath almost gone.



"Mammy!" he gasped, "I was up in de top ob de chestnut tree when I seed dem Yankees comin' up de road fas' as dey kin ride."

"Aunt Em" jumped to her feet. "Run in de kitchen, chile," she said, "an' keep your mouth shet tight," and as the boy darted away she ran to the parlor door and shouted the fateful words: "De Yankees is comin'."

"The Yankees are coming!" How often that dread cry had sent a thrill of fear to the heart of every man, woman and child in Mosby's Confederacy!

Hipkins ran out to the porch, pistol in hand. He gave one glance and saw the Bluecoats, a few hundred yards away, divide right and left to surround the house. "Too late, 'Aunt Em,'" he said, "I'm a goner."

The woman's eyes followed his, and she whispered:

"Follow me. I may fool dem Yankees yet," and she hurried down the steps with Hipkins close behind her.

At the corner of the kitchen stood a large barrel, which was used to catch the rainwater dripping from the roof. She pointed to it: "Quick!" she panted; "jump in thar." He scrambled in, and though the barrel was half-full, he never noticed it. Seizing a short board she laid it across the barrel, and, giving a spring, she seated herself on top of it, then gazed serenely around. She did the trick in the very niche of time, for instantly the yard was filled with the Blue-coats. At this juncture Mrs. Faulkner and her daughter appeared on the front porch, pale, silent and impassive. An officer walked up the steps and curtly told her she must yield up the Rebel soldier in her house or suffer the consequences. She replied that there was no soldier within, but the officer insisted that there was, and said that one of his scouts, while scanning the country through a field glass, had seen a Rebel soldier go through the orchard, and later enter the house by the rear entrance. Mrs. Faulkner declared positively that there were no Confederate soldiers in the house, and told him to search the place if he doubted her word.

The officer summoned a sergeant and ordered him to take a squad of men and search every room in the house, also the outhouses; examine every bed, box and barrel where a man might be concealed.

The soldiers departed on their quest, and Mrs. Faulkner, anxious to propitiate the officer, invited him

in the dining-room and set before him a bottle of black-berry wine and some home-made cake.

After drinking several glasses, the social side of the man appeared and he grew confidential. He said that one of the Jessie Scouts, with a powerful field glass, saw distinctly a Rebel soldier cross the hill and make for the house. Mrs. Faulkner was discreetly silent on this point, but she was a woman of infinite tact, and she turned the conversation by asking the officer about his own family and home, and soon the brusque, curt captain of cavalry was changed into a pleasant sociable caller who let himself out as he talked of his wife and child in far-off Michigan. No homesick soldier ever had more appreciative, attentive and sympathetic listeners than were those two women who were playing a game of life and death.



In the meantime, out on the barrel, "Aunt Em," in her scanty drapery, literally spread herself to conceal as much of the barrel as possible, reminding one of a motherly hen trying to cover an unusually large brood of chickens.

The soldiers asked her all sorts of questions, and laughed at her attitude and all too free display of ankles; but "Aunt Em" kept her seat and her temper, even when her kitchen and bedroom was being ransacked. She must have felt grim satisfaction in know-

ing that they expected to find toothsome viands in the kitchen, and were to meet with only woeful disappointment.

Soon the cavalrymen gathered in the yard and clustered on the porch; and then the captain, remembering his duty, left the house, and approaching the woman on the barrel plied her with questions and put "Aunt Em" through what is known in modern days as the "third degree." He might as well have interrogated the sphinx. She said she "didn't know nuffin'," and behind this breastwork she remained. Puzzled and angry, the officer gave it up. He came to the conclusion that she was simply a deucedly ignorant, ugly old African, with no idea above frying, boiling and stewing.

The ladies came on the porch with the sergeant and his detail. The non-commissioned officer reported to the captain that he had made a thorough and exhaustive examination of the house and outbuildings, and not even a cat could have escaped discovery. The scout adhered firmly to his declaration that he had seen the Rebel soldier enter the house and had watched the place closely, but had seen no one go away. Had the house been one of old colonial architecture there might have been suspicion of a secret chamber, but in a modern frame mansion such an idea was impracticable. The Rebel came, and the Rebel disappeared; as he could neither fly like an eagle nor burrow like a mole, where was he?

A second time witnesses were hauled before the

court. Mrs. Faulkner was asked many questions. She told the truth, saying that a soldier had been there that morning, but seeing the Federal soldiers coming that he ran from the room, and she saw him no more. Then the little darkey was brought before the captain and warned that if he did not tell where the Rebel sol-



dier was that he would be shot. The little nigger-face had changed from a deep black to a ashy liver color. He was afraid of death, but more afraid of his mammy. One was intangible, the other a living figure that sat there on the barrel and never stirred. So the boy's only answer was: "I ain't seed nuffin'! I don't know nuffin'!"

For some time the ladies stood on the porch waiting, the soldiers resting at ease, chatting and smoking, while the officer walked up and down in deep thought; but the figure on the barrel never stirred. At last the captain gave the word, the bugle rang out "boots and saddles;" the men mounted and soon disappeared down the road.

"Aunt Em" called to her boy and bade him follow and see if any of them remained behind. He returned in a few moments and reported that every one had left for good.

Then for the first time the motionless figure moved. "Aunt Em" slid off the barrel and cried: "Come out;" and there emerged a pale, dripping, trembling, hollow-eyed youth. Straightening himself, he threw his arms around the old black mammy and gave her a good hug; and more, he kissed her gratefully and warmly.

"I heard it all," he cried; "'Aunt Em,' you are a jewel!"

"Was you skeered, honey?" she asked.

"Yes, 'Aunt Em,' I was scared nearly to death, for I was afraid that some dearned Yankee would run his sabre through the bung hole."

CHAPTER XXIV.

REPRESENTATIVE PICTURES FROM OLD LETTERS BY
WOMEN OF THE DEBATABLE LAND.



The following letter was written by Mrs. James De Ruyter Blackwell, the mistress of Oakmont, and describes the situation in the early part of the war. She pays a beautiful tribute to that gallant soldier, General Sedgwick, who commanded the famous Sixth Corps of the Army of the Potomac, and who was killed in the Wilderness, in May, 1864:

“The other evening when I and the girls were sitting around the fire, a soldier walked right in, unannounced, stared at us and asked, ‘Where are your men?’

“One of the girls spoke up: ‘They are in the army, where every Southern man ought to be.’

“‘Well!’ said the soldier, ‘they are acting according to their lights; but it isn’t right to leave you ladies all alone; arn’t you hungry?’ We acknowledged that we were. He then said:

“‘I’ll go to camp and get you something.’ And he walked off. Of course we never expected to see him again; but would you believe it, he returned with a basket of crackers, meat, coffee, sugar and cakes, and would not accept a cent for it. He said the place reminded him of his own home; very handsome of him, was it not?”

In another letter Mrs. Blackwell says:

“We have been treated very kindly; it is true the Northern soldiers help themselves to what they want—all our horses and grain have been taken—yet they are rarely insolent, and so far as I can hear the officers are always courteous.

“I want to tell you about General Sedgwick, who commands the troops around here. He is a most kind and thorough gentleman. You know Miss ——, how eccentric she is. Well, some of the soldiers took her horse, and she started off all alone to see the general. As you know, she is a lady born and bred, but such a get-up! She was dressed in a riding skirt made

from an old tent, and on her head was an old sunbonnet made of calico. She met Colonel McMahan, the general's aide, and he conducted her to his tent and treated her with as much courtesy as if she had been a princess of the blood royal—and he had her horse restored to her.

“The general's headquarters is on the road between Oakspring and Warrenton. He is a big-hearted, noble man, and I cannot begin to tell you of his unvarying kindness to our people; he often ordered from the North things that the ladies needed, and paid for them out of his own pocket. He actually had forwarded to him a lot of hoopskirts to present to the ladies of the vicinity—and the general a bachelor, too!”

In another letter Mrs. Blackwell describes most vividly how she hid her silver and five hundred dollars in gold in a corner under the porch. She then describes a visit of some Bluecoat marauders:

“They surrounded the house,” she wrote, “a large squad of them, and were evidently bent on a voyage of discovery, rather than robbery. It was the secret hoard they were after, and I cannot imagine where they obtained the information, for we have closely guarded our secret, but this much is certain, they came for hidden treasure, and began hoeing the ground around the house, and to my horror they approached the porch, testing the ground to see if it had been disturbed recently, and examining every inch of the surface. I grew deathly sick, for I knew they would discover the spot

if let alone; so I rushed up stairs and got my jewel case and cried to the servant to get my jewels and bring them to me. This attracted the notice of the resurrection party, who came flying up stairs. They searched the room most carefully, but found nothing. Of course I found a new hiding-place that night, and as sharp as Mr. Yankee is, I defy him to find it; I am sure that his eyes will never be gladdened by the sight of my hidden treasures."

In one letter the writer gives an amusing description of some Federal deserters. She says:

"I was in the kitchen when Spot, the setter, and the only living thing on four legs that the Yankees haven't taken from the farm, gave one of his short, jerky barks, and I knew that he was mad enough to bite, so I ran out, and lo and behold! there were three Yankees, all armed with muskets, and Spot dancing around them.

"I asked them what they wanted, and they commenced such a jargon as I never heard before; they howled, they hollowed, they hooted, and they growled way down in their stomachs. I was frightened, and called ma, and when she came they turned on her, but ma only shook her head. Then they commenced with signs, and ma said they were Dutchmen and wanted something to eat. We gave them some corn bread and beans; they had never seen or eaten corn bread, and they made wry mouths, and one spat out a piece; they ate up all the beans, though. After they had finished they talked and jabbered among themselves, and then

they unbuckled their belts and threw them on the floor, and leaned their guns against the wall and pointed towards the north. Then mother cried out: 'They are deserters and are running away from the army!'

"The next thing they did was to point to their uniforms and shake their heads, and mother told me to run upstairs and get some old clothes that the boys had left behind. When I came back their faces lighted up, and they bowed and scraped, and went off talking their outlandish Dutch.

"We hid their muskets and things and will send them to our army."

A letter so blurred from time and exposure that a portion must be read by the aid of a powerful magnifying glass, addressed to a lady in Richmond from a girl in Fauquier in 1864, gives the following true and representative picture of conditions in the Debatable Land in the later years of the war:

"A brigade of Yankee infantry is camped in the fields near the house, and every evening the regimental bands march and play. Oh! the music is divine; that is, some of it is. When they play their horrid national airs I run in the house and cover my ears with my hands. They played *Trovatore* last evening and it wafted me to heaven; but just imagine—they followed it by that hateful 'John Brown's body lies a mouldering in the grave!' Anyway, I thought, there will be a good many following John Brown's example if they keep trying to subjugate the South."

An old veteran who married a Fauquier girl after the war showed me a letter which he received from her in 1864. They were affianced, and he urged her to marry him, war or no war. A part of her reply is given:

"It is true I am alone and unprotected, but so are many others in this country, and it would give me the joy of my life to have you beside me; and I long for you as only a loving woman can. But this is not the time; Virginia is a vast hospital, and I would feel ashamed should I marry: a bride among the sick, wounded and dying, and instead of the music of the marriage bells I would hear only the groans, the cries and the death rattle."

The following letter gives a very clear idea of the straits to which the people in the southern portion of Fauquier were reduced. It was written by a young girl whose home was about three miles from Rappahannock Station:

"Wyanoke, Nov. 1, 1864.

"My Dear Lizzie:

"It was so sweet and thoughtful of you to send the letter and little box by Frank, and to think that boy dared ride for twenty miles all alone through this dangerous country, shows what a brave soldier he will make when he grows up.

"Your letter has been read and reread by the whole household from grandpa down, even Aunt Hannah and Uncle Peter demanded it be read to them.

"All of our darkeys have left but those two. Uncle Peter made them go, saying that there was 'not enough for white folks, let alone the niggers.' Uncle Peter and his wife still keep their quarters over the stable; though Uncle Peter must miss his horses. Aunt Hannah is still our cook, in name; don't you remember how you used to rave over her biscuits and hot rolls? We don't have any now.

"You asked me to tell you all about our life in Wyanoke. Well, it's easily told; it is the abomination of desolation, and We, Us & Co., meaning grandpa, ma and Lucy and Jane and I, exist; I don't call it living. It seems as if we were on a little island in the middle of the ocean, for not a soul do we see; no visitors, nothing. Both the Yankee and Lee's army have long since gone, and we haven't laid eyes on a Confederate soldier since last spring. Most all of our neighbors left last spring, and we would have gone, too, but we had no place to go. As our place sits well back from the main road, we are spared the raiding parties, but they wouldn't get much, for grandpa sent all of the silver, plate and money to Richmond. Ma is not sick, but she is listless and indifferent to everything since pa was killed at Gettysburg. I don't know what would become of us without Uncle Peter; he actually owns the place and we do as he tells us. He still calls me 'Honey,' and I asked him why he didn't call me Miss Minnie, now that I have grown up, and he said: 'I done call you "Honey" de

same as Hannah do, and we bofe will call you that till Kingdom cum.'

"Uncle Peter is simply a wonder! He is as old as grandpa, yet he is on the go all the time; he plants our garden and sets gums and snares, and we have plenty of old hares, but the possums Aunt Hannah serves—I can't eat the horrid, greasy things—like a big rat. But I must tell you the last thing Uncle Peter did; he is always roaming around the country and brings us all sorts of things. When we ask him where he got them, he always answers 'Larroes ketch meddlers.' Well, as I was saying, he went off last week and returned three or four days after with a bundle of six blue overcoats. They came in very handy, and I have already made a very good dress for myself, and there is enough to go around.

"Grandpa continues in good health; all during the summer he sat in an armchair under the old oak; every morning he reads the family prayers, and after breakfast listens to Lucy and Jane recite their lessons, which I taught them the day before. Grandpa has no interest in anything except the war. When Uncle Peter brings home a newspaper he keeps it and reads every word before he will let it go out of his possession.

"I dread the coming winter beyond words, though Uncle Peter has two hogs fattening in the woods; and we have much to be thankful for. We live on corn bread; no butter since last spring, and as for tea and

sugar, I have forgotten how they taste. We have sassafras root for tea, sweetened with sorghum, which Uncle Peter raises, and we have learned to eat to live, not live to eat.

"But the winter is going to be hard; as we can rarely get oil or candles, we have to go to bed soon after dark; and then we have nothing to read; every book in the house has been read and reread until it is so dog-eared and finger-marked that it is ruined. Well, this cruel war can't last forever.

"You would scarcely recognize in me the stylish young lady you used to know. I wish I could show you a picture of myself at the present writing. We have about exhausted the wardrobes we owned before the war and have to resort to all sorts of makeshifts. Besides the dress made of the overcoats Uncle Peter brought, I am wearing shoes made by my own hands out of some old felt hats that Uncle Peter picked up somewhere; they are warm, but not water-proof; stockings made from the sleeves of wornout underclothes; my headgear is a bonnet made from scraps; but the masterpiece is a pair of gloves made from some pieces of broadcloth which I fear Uncle Peter must have cut from some Yankee officer's coat. They are not a 'perfect fit,' but they do very well and keep my hands warm when I am obliged to go in the woods and gather fagots to burn in the stove.

"Before I had this dress (made from the aforesaid overcoats) ma and I took the last of our sheets and

dyed them with butternut bark and made ourselves dresses of them, but they, too, are now in tatters.

“Sometime, possibly, we may be able to laugh at our present condition and appearance, but just now it is too pathetic. Oh! to once more sit down to a real dinner—a piece of cake—a dish of pudding—but then when I think of our poor soldiers living on corn or snow for sugar (as many of them do), I am thankful for even the corn bread and gravy made of meat drippings and water with a little vinegar as a piquant flavoring. Did you ever taste it? That’s what we had yesterday.

“Lucy and Jane are very proud of their new shoes. We found a leather valise in the attic and Uncle Peter and I ripped it up and made moccasins for the two girls. They are really fine; and as we never expect to travel again, we do not regret the valise.”

CHAPTER XXV.

GIVE HONOR TO WHOM HONOR IS DUE.



America is rich in female heroism, and the sentiment so forcible a century ago that "Westward the Star of Empire makes its way," is but the untold tale of what the women of that time suffered and endured.

Did the sun ever shine on a braver woman than Elizabeth Zane, a daughter of Virginia? In monarchical Europe her name would be a household word;

but American history, so illuminant with the deeds of the heroes of the American Revolution, gives to her only a small paragraph.

The histories of the world might be searched, but no grander tales of heroic women can be found than those of the pioneer women of Kentucky, who, by the way, mostly hailed from the Valley of Virginia. The historian Cook grows enthusiastic in their praise.

Henry Watterson said of these Virginia pioneers:

“The star that shone above him and led him on was love of liberty, the beacon of his dreams, the light of the fireside. He cut a clearing in the wildwood and called it ‘home.’ He read not romance, he made it; nor poetry, he lived it; his the forest epic, the Iliad of the canebrake, the Odyssey of the frontier, the unconscious prose-poem of the rifle and the camp, the blockhouse and the plow, the Holy Bible and the old field school.

“Happy the man who has sat in childhood upon a well-loved grandsire’s knee, awed by the telling of the wondrous tale; how even as the Dardanae followed Aeneas, the Virginians followed Boone; the route from Troy to Tiber not wearier, nor flanked by greater hazard, than that betwixt the shores of the Chesapeake and the Falls of the Ohio; the mountains standing, gorgon-like, across the pathless way, as if, defending each defile, to hold inviolate some dread, forbidden secret; the weird wastes of wilderness beyond; the fordless stream; the yawning chasm; the gleam of the toma-

hawk and the hiss of the serpent; yet ever onward, spite of the haunting voice of the elements, stripped for the death-struggle with man, spite of the silence and the solitude of reluctant Nature, like some fawn-eyed maiden, resisting his rude intrusion; ever onward; before him the promised land of the hunter's vision; in his soul the grace of God, the fear of hell and the love of Virginia!

"They came, the Virginians, in their home-spun in quest of homes; their warrant their rifles; their payment the blood of heroes; nor yet forgetting a proverb the Chinese have that 'it needs a hundred men to make a fortress, but only a woman to make a home'—for they were quick to go back for their women—their wives and their sweethearts, our grandmothers, who stood by their side beautiful and dauntless, to load their fowling-pieces, to dress their wounds, to cheer them on to battle, singing their simple requiem over the dead at Boonesborough and bringing water from the spring at Bryan's Station, heart-broken only when the news came back from the River basin.

"God bless Virginia! Heaven smile upon her as she prepares to celebrate with fitting rite three centuries of majestic achievement, the star-crown upon her brow, the distaff in her hand, nor spot, nor blur to dim the radiance of her shield!"

In the history of Boston by Daniel Neal, an Englishman, he states that the flame of the colonists' rebellion was kindled at Boston in 1765, when the Stamp Act was

passed and the cargo of tea was burned in Boston Harbor, and that the women of Boston, putting behind them their love of that beverage which "cheers but does not inebriate," were the prime instigators of the movement.

In the Revolutionary War the Patriot's cause would have failed but for the women. Thomas Payne described the condition of the army at Valley Forge, the winter after Arnold's treason, and the inability of the Government to provide for the troops. Had it not been for the women who furnished clothing and food, and in every way helping to ameliorate the suffering of the despairing soldiers, George Washington would have been hiding in the caves of the Blue Ridge Mountains, with a price on his head, and Benedict Arnold would have been the despot of His Majesty's Provinces. Man, egotistical man, claims everything; he even claims to have been made in the image of his maker; and these little tin gods, both on foot and on horseback, are to be found in every part of the country. In great America one may travel from Alaska's icy mountains to Florida's coral strand, yet never see one single shaft or monument raised in honor of America's women.

Who was it that furnished Washington with full information as to the movements and station of the British that enabled Washington to cross the Delaware and win the victory at Trenton? It was the rebel women of Philadelphia. Who was it that handled the cannon at Monmouth after the gunners were killed? A woman. Who was it that saved Marion three times from Tarle-

ton's cavalry? A woman. Who won the Mighty West? Not the traders, the trappers or the huntsmen, whose coming and going left the virgin land as untouched as are the lakes from the dip of the paddle. Was it the frontiersman, whose wagon or ox-cart carried himself and wife towards the setting sun? It was the wife who fed him, clothed him, loaded his rifle, and often aimed it, to beat back his enemies. "Westward the Star of Empire takes its way." Ah, yes! But only when women's footsteps echo in the land.

The West is sprinkled with statues to "My Lord," but "My Lady" in bronze or marble is never seen except in some tree-shadowed graveyard. "*A monument to me, a stone to her,*" has ever been man's ultimatum. Yea, for his own self-glorification, he has caused to be built a spacious room in which he has planted some figures, and has named it "The Hall of Immortals." Unlike Mrs. Jarley's waxworks, there are no females on view.

The ancients honored their women far above modern world. The Imperial City was full of statues to the Roman women. Near the Coliseum was the equestrian statue of the heroine Cornelia. On the Via Sacra was a temple in honor of Tertinia, and another one to Volumbria; and this, in a city where a woman had no rights in law. The wife's fortune was her husband's, and according to Cato, he could beat his wife or even sell her. But the Romans could rise above sex and commemorate in chiseled marble the noble qualities of

her people. There is also a statue to Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, who refused Ptolemy and a crown, who, both Plutarch and Quintilian declare, was a gem of womanhood.

There was in Rome a woman who for half a century did more towards shaping the destinies of the empire than did the august Senate itself; her name was Livia, the wife of the Emperor Augustus. Plutarch says: "She united the purity of Diana, the benevolence of Ceres and the wisdom and craft of Minerva. In features, Venus; in manners, Juno." Says Ovid: "She raised her head against all vices." There were many busts and statues of this remarkable woman.

Among the Hebrews there were women whose names will never die. Huldah, the prophetess, who spoke when men were afraid to lift their voices; and Deborah, who overcame the enemies of Israel, and Judith and Esther, who saved the people of God.

In the Golden Age of Greece, when the standard for culture, music, poetry and song was set for all ages to come, women stood on a pedestal, where they will remain as long as history shall exist. There was Sappho, who twenty-five centuries ago was the greatest lyric poet that ever penned verses; they swept men's souls. "The divine Sappho," as Byron called her, and his tribute to her is among the finest lines in his odes to Greece. There is a splendid statue of her in Byzantine. Her face was stamped upon the coins of Greece.

Pericles said: "My wife rules me, I rule Athens,

and Athens rules the world." That is the grandest compliment from a man to a woman, a husband to a wife, that ever passed mortal lips. A noble statue was erected to her memory.

Many essayists, and poets as well, have placed the love of country above that of all other human affections. Leana, the Athenian, who valued her country above her life, has carved upon her statue of white marble, "The greatest patriot that immortal Greece ever gave to the world."

In Europe there are many statues erected to women. The Maid of Saragossa and Jeanne D'Arc are sculptured, and there are fine statues of Mother Anna of Saxony, Lady Seton of Scotland, Florence Nightingale and Grace Darling of England.

On the battlefield of Gettysburg there are hundreds of statues of men; but not one has ever been erected in honor of those noble women who gathered there from all quarters of the Union to nurse and comfort the wounded and drop pitying tears upon the dead.

Now a word about the statues. The ones representing the officers of the Confederate Army are in the main correct; their equipments and uniform are such as they wore in the great conflict, for the wear and tear, the hurly-burly of war, did not efface their uniforms, as the staff officers, colonels and generals had each their trunk, a body servant of sable hue, to brush their

clothes, and the headquarters wagon for transportation. But the private soldier, with his old slouch hat set askew, his tarnished jacket tattered and torn, his pants stuffed in his boots, his blanket slung across his shoulder, containing in its folds an extra pair of socks and a shirt, his rough brogans—Shades of Mars, what a contrast! It was as if the officers of the French King's household guards in their gallant showing were leading a motley throng of "Sans Culottes."

The statues of the Confederate soldier throughout the Southland are fine as a work of art, and reflect credit on the artist, but as preserving the truth of history, they are a rank failure. When the generations yet unborn gaze upon those plump, well-fed, well-dressed figures standing on their pedestals on many a courthouse green, supposed to be a striking prototype of those matchless soldiers who followed Lee, the coming race will conclude that the tales of misery, want and poverty that the Confederate soldier went through were but the traditions of "old wives' tales."

A "looker-on in Vienna" standing on the side of a road in the "sixties" and watching the legions of Lee streaming up the valley pike on their way to Gettysburg, or defiling their way through the slashes of the wilderness, or during a double quick through the woods of old Spottsylvania, could see the typical Confederate soldier in his glory. Years of discipline, of diet, of drill, had moulded them in a distinct type. They were the flower of the Anglo-Saxon race, purified of dross,

and tempered like steel. A prize-fighter takes three months of hard training to throw off fat and get in perfect physical condition, but Johnny Reb had been three years on the job, and was a being of bone, blood and sinew. He had got close to his primeval ancestor and he could harmlessly undergo hardships which would assuredly have sent the average citizen to the hospital or the grave. The Confederate soldier could sleep on the bare ground, he could make his thirty miles a day, and forget about it the next morning; his face was bronzed by the sun and tanned by the weather, and his visage was lean and gaunt. He was, as the mountaineers expressed it, "lantern-jawed." His once gray uniform was patched, hit or miss, and in an active campaign, discolored with earth, tarnished with battle smoke, and torn by the briers. The owner philosophically smoked his pipe and said he would dress up in full dress when the war was over. The girls laughed and cried by turns when he visited them, but were prouder of him dressed in those rags than if he had been arrayed in the showy uniform of the "Queen's own," but minus his daring and glorious record.

As the surviving veteran of the South today views these statues of the soldiers in gray, his mind flashes back to those stirring days of the sixties, and he cannot help thinking that they represent the men who carried the gun, carried the sabre or pulled the lanyard about as much as the picture of the reigning monarchs in Mrs. Jarley's waxworks.

If the women of the South proved their love for the Southland during the Civil War, the true women of the North also had their cause at heart. It was through their efforts that the famous Sanitary Commission was formed and worked. But no shaft commemorates their noble work.

In 1865, after Grant's frightful loss in the Wilderness and his bloody repulse at Cold Harbor and The Crater, the *New York Herald* floated the white flag and called for a Peace Congress. Henry Ward Beecher wrote that the only thing that saved the Union at that critical time was "the temper of the women that rose above defeat." But no bust of marble or monument of bronze has been built in their honor.

And the South! The land of "Song and Story!" Her history is illumined with the noble deeds of her daughters. What must the coming generations think of a country that neglected to commemorate with either the mason's trowel, the sculptor's chisel or the artist's brush the fame of the grand Southern women of '61 and '65?

North Carolina and South Carolina, of all this land, have erected splendid statues of marble to honor and commemorate the virtues of the women of their respective States who worked, suffered and endured during the Civil War, but Virginia has none!





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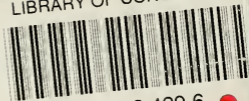
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